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Joseph C Manning, Alabama populist: a rebel against the solid south

Paul M. Pruitt

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JOSEPH C. MANNING, ALABAMA POPULIST:
A REBEL AGAINST THE SOLID SOUTH

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of History
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Paul McWhorter Pruitt, Jr.
1980
This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

This study follows the career of Joseph Columbus Manning (1870-1930), an Alabamian who took part in both the People's Party movement of the 1890's and the early work of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Manning founded the People's Party of Alabama in 1892, and subsequently fought to preserve its independence. Hampered by the leadership of powerful conservative agrarian Reuben Kolb and by voting frauds practiced by entrenched Bourbon Democrats, Manning speedily adopted the battle cry: "A Free Ballot and a Fair Count."

In 1894, after "Jeffersonian Democratic" gubernatorial candidate Kolb had been counted out for the second time, Manning and his Populist cohorts assumed control of the agrarian movement and invited the Alabama GOP to join them in requesting a congressional investigation of state politics. Discussion of this "Congressional Strategy" dominated reform politics in Alabama for the next two years.

In 1896, when the disruption of Populism was certain, Manning joined the Republican Party, eventually gaining a post office appointment in Alexander City, Alabama. He held this position until 1909.

As a Populist and as a Republican, Manning worked to preserve the rights of all men. In his later years—the years of the disfranchisement era in the South—he wrote civil rights pamphlets and was a rank-and-file worker for the NAACP. The story of his life is a striking testimony to the democratic and equalitarian spirit inherent in agrarian thought.
JOSEPH C. MANNING, ALABAMA POPULIST:
A REBEL AGAINST THE SOLID SOUTH
INTRODUCTION

The story of Joseph Columbus Manning (1870-1930) goes against many of the clichés of late nineteenth-century Southern history. Born into a North Alabama merchant-class family, Manning renounced from childhood the Bourbon political principles of his father. At the age of twenty-one, while working as a journalist in Atlanta, he joined the Populist movement, converted by agrarian orators and Tom Watson's *People's Party Paper*. In the spring of 1892, after serving with conspicuous brilliance as a stump speaker and lecturer in Georgia, he was entrusted with the task of organizing the People's Party in Alabama.

Ironically, Manning was never able to preach the "politics of the Subtreasury" effectively in his native state. Agrarian politics in Alabama were dominated by the well-organized supporters of gubernatorial candidate Reuben F. Kolb, an astute politician who long hoped to institute reforms and preserve a united Democracy. Outmaneuvered by his Bourbon enemies at the Democratic convention of June 1892, Kolb mounted an independent "Jeffersonian Democratic" campaign against Governor Thomas G. Jones, the regular nominee. When the Jeffersonians' apparent victory in the August state election was nullified, as many had expected, by official acceptance of fraudulent returns from the Black Belt, the future pattern of Alabama politics was established. All anti-Bourbon forces—Jeffersonians, Populists, and
Republicans—rallied around the martyred Kolb. The agrarian battle cry from 1892 to 1896 would be for "A Free Ballot and a Fair Count."

Manning was able to hold together a small but growing Alabama People's Party, though he had little choice but to adjust to the circumstances of the reform movement. Advocating Straightout Populism whenever he could, he worked hard to prevent Kolb (who persisted in calling himself a Jeffersonian Democrat) from compromising with an entrenched and arrogant "Organized" Democratic Party. Compromise, Manning accurately predicted, could only be effected along the lines of the "Mississippi Plan" and constitutional disfranchisement of Alabama's biracial lower-class majority. In 1894, newly elected to the legislature, Manning completed his adjustment to the realities of Alabama politics. Seizing leadership of the agrarian forces from Kolb, he advanced a "Congressional Strategy" by which the state People's Party and the Republican Party of Alabama appealed to the Republican-controlled Fifty-fourth Congress to investigate the notoriously fraudulent elections of the last two years.

To lend force to the reformists' demands, Manning organized a short-lived Southern Ballot Rights League in 1895, and toured the nation in an attempt to interest Northern Republicans in the political and economic plight of Southern farmers. At the same time, over the bitter objections of radical purists, the Manning wing of the People's Party perfected a fusionist alliance with the state GOP. In the end, however, Congress failed to investigate the Alabama frauds, and the Congressional Strategy came to nought. The Democrats, under the leadership of silverite Joseph F. Johnston, swept the state in 1896.
After the "fadeout of Populism," Manning joined the Republican Party and spent the rest of his life fighting the Southern Democracy, in an increasingly hopeless struggle against the disfranchisement of the region's lower class. As the years of national Republican supremacy passed without any effective congressional or executive challenge to conditions in the South, he turned increasingly for aid and friendship to Southern black "expatriates" and their friends in the urban centers of the North. In 1909 he left Alabama, participated in the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and settled, ultimately, in New York City. There he supported himself precariously as a writer for black newspapers and as a business and political agent for wealthy civil rights advocates. Throughout his experiences as a Populist and Republican, therefore, Manning demonstrated a consistent, deepening faith in the dignity, worth, and political equality of all men. He was not without the prejudices shared by most nineteenth-century Americans—for much of his life he regarded black voters as political innocents in dire need of protection and proper guidance—but it is clear that to a considerable degree he was able to transcend the bigotry of his times.

Contemporary sources, as well as his own autobiographical works, reveal that Joseph Manning was a man of considerable force, courage, and charm. Even so, it is appropriate to ask whether such a minor public figure deserves a book-length biography. Dedicated though he was, Manning does not rank among the notable organizers (not to mention theorizers) of the People's Party movement. Judged as an advocate of civil liberty, on the other hand, he is an
interesting exception to the general rule; after all, few white agrarians became life-long crusaders for racial justice. In addition, though Manning’s life represents an extreme of equalitarianism and dogged persistence, his story will serve as a necessary antithesis to the epic tale of Tom Watson, which has dominated the biographical literature of Populism. C. Vann Woodward’s *Tom Watson, Agrarian Rebel* (1938) is an historical classic and a model of passionate biography. But Woodward’s discussion of Watson’s dramatic turn away from biracial class unity has left its mark on the historical profession. Especially as condensed in his popular work, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (1955, 1966, 1974), Woodward’s account of Watson’s transformation has led scholars to assume that nearly all Southern Populists remained bigots at heart, that most agrarians turned their backs upon the black-white coalition in disgust over its failure and reentered the Democracy as rabid disfranchisers. It is true that several recent studies, notably J. Morgan Kousser's *The Shaping of Southern Politics: Suffrage Restriction and the Establishment of the One-Party South, 1880-1910* (1974) and Lawrence Goodwyn’s *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America* (1976), have indicated that ex-Populists were not typically vindictive racists. Indeed, these scholars maintain that white “yeomen” and black sharecroppers realized that their political fates were interwoven. Yet many local and biographical investigations, such as the present study, must be carried out before a true picture of Populism and the Populists will emerge.

From 1892 until their final defeat in 1901, a majority of Alabama Populists and Republicana, often led by Joseph Manning, opposed a
Democratic suffrage restriction movement. Their resistance to traditional racism was given form, in large part, by Manning's fusionist campaigns. Their motives may well have been pragmatic and self-serving—though it is difficult to reach a conclusion on this point—but they attempted to preserve the rudiments of a free society. As a leader of such a people, Manning deserves recognition and understanding. For in a real sense, telling the story of his political life brings us one step closer to understanding the life of the people he represented.

No scholarly writing is the product of only one person's work and intelligence. It is a pleasure to list several individuals who contributed work and intelligence, kindness and knowledge to this dissertation.

William Warren Rogers of Florida State University, one of Alabama's most distinguished historians, suggested the Joseph C. Manning topic. In addition, he gave freely of his seemingly inexhaustible storehouse of anecdotes, information, and insights concerning Alabama Populism.

Cam Walker, director of this dissertation and chairman of my committee, remained calm during a three years' barrage of questions, entreaties, and philosophical crises. Her broad, sympathetic knowledge of Populism and her quickness to grasp ideological differences among several varieties of agrarians were factors which materially assisted this study. Richard Sherman, Edward Crapol, and James Thompson, as members of my committee, provided a steady and necessary combination of criticism and moral support during the final stages of composition.
Lawrence Goodwyn was a most atypical "outside" reader. Nearly all of the research and writing of this biography was done with his words, printed or spoken, ringing in my ears, daring me to produce a lasting work.

Milo B. Howard, Director of the Alabama State Department of Archives and History, was a constant source of encouragement and excellent suggestions. Joseph Caver of the Civil Archives Division and Mimi Jones of the Manuscripts Division proved again and again that they would go to any trouble in a good cause. Robert Corley of the Manuscripts Division, Birmingham Public Library, showed a similar spirit.

David Alsobrook, an Archivist in the Office of Presidential Libraries, National Archives, Washington, D.C., deserves special mention. One of the most knowledgeable and skilled of the younger Alabama historians, David devoted a great deal of his free time in 1978-1979 to unearthing letters written by Joseph Manning. For help in locating and interpreting Manning letters in the Booker T. Washington Papers, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, William H. Taft Papers, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Papers, and other collections in the Library of Congress, and for his warm and self-sacrificing friendship, I am in David's debt.

John C. Broderick, Chief of the Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, was unfailingly patient with a number of long-distance requests. In particular, he helped locate a number of Manning letters in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Papers.
Several Alabamians were consistently gracious and helpful. These men and women include Judge C.J. Coley, historian and raconteur of Alexander City; Mrs. J. Otis Lindsey of Alexander City, landlady extraordinary; H.E. Sterkx, Chairman of the History Department, Auburn University at Montgomery, whose sardonic wit helped carry me through some rough hours; and Dean Charles Farrow, Alexander City State Junior College, whose generosity made research an easier task.

I would like to thank my parents, Mr. and Mrs. P.M. Pruitt, for speeding me on my way with their continued insistence that no dissertation could take as much time as I was spending on this one. Naturally, their skills as editors, proofreaders and critics proved useful as well.

"Joseph C. Manning, Alabama Populist: A Rebel Against the Solid South" is dedicated to my wife, Juliet Bare Pruitt. Her contributions to the mechanics of the work—research and critical reading—were considerable over a period of three years, but do not constitute her chief contribution. She never doubted, though she at times provided, the spirit and determination with which the job was begun and taken to a stage of completion. Thus she shares the credit for this piece of writing, as she shared the difficulties.
CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD, GROWTH AND PREPARATION

Joseph Columbus Manning was born on May 21, 1870, in Lineville, Alabama, a Clay County village of "less than half a dozen wooden store buildings." On that day no one, least of all the infant son of Henry A. and Martha H. Manning, could have known that he was destined to be one of the most powerful orators in Alabama, a "Clay County Evangel" for the People's Party and a fearless crusader for civil rights. Still more important, Joseph Manning grew up to overcome and analyze the racial and sectional prejudices which were part of his cultural heritage. But like all children, he commenced life with the birthright his community and family had to offer.

Located in the Hill Country of east-central Alabama, Clay County had been created from portions of surrounding counties by the unionist-dominated "provisional" Reconstruction legislature of 1866. By 1870 the county boasted nearly 10,000 inhabitants, of whom 92 percent were white. These were typically men and women of Scotch-Irish stock, independent-minded, resentful of outside authority and hostile toward Black Belt folk, whether Negroes or planters. At the time of Joseph Manning's birth most of these yeomen were landholders, but the cyclical depressions of the 1870's and 1880's would drive an increasing number into tenancy or sharecropping. Indeed, thanks to the
ubiquitous crop lien system, Clay County was a society in the process of polarization into economic and social classes.¹

Yet for all its mounting inequality, "Joey" Manning's world was one of such overwhelming rurality that all of its citizens were touched by common events and concerns. The two towns of Lineville and Ashland were the strongholds of merchants and politicians, but these gentry were alert to developments in the agricultural life they sought to manipulate. For their part, farmers came to town to hear the news read from the rigidly Bourbon Montgomery Advertiser, and to take part in court week when, as Manning later recalled, "sweet cider and watermelons sold on the . . . square, and it was all an event." All families, high, low, black, and white took part in the seasonal round of hunting and fishing, and in the (Methodist or Baptist) meeting house culture of picnics, revivals, and all-day sings.²

Nothing so well illustrates the mingling of intimacy and exploitation in Clay County as the story of Henry A. Manning, Joseph's father. Coming to Lineville from Marietta County, Georgia, during the Civil War, the elder Manning established himself as a farmer and small-scale supply merchant.³ By 1875-1880, the first years for which records survive, he had granted "deed trusts" and liens to exactly two hundred farmers and was ready to move his operation to Ashland, the county seat. Borrowing $2500 from Lehman, Durr and Company of Montgomery, Henry Manning expanded his business, charging his credit customers 60-75 per cent interest and granting 97 mortgages in 1884-1885 alone. "While others were complaining he was about his business," and in the late 1880's Henry turned over to his eldest son Robert the
Predictably, as H.A. Manning grew in financial power over his neighbors, he became a member of the "oligarchy" of merchants, lawyers, and preachers who dominated Clay County life. In 1866, he was one of several respectable citizens asked to supervise the first elections held in Clay County. By 1880, when he moved to Ashland, Manning was listed as "General Administrator" of confiscated and intestate property under his business colleague and fellow-Methodist, Probate Judge Hiram M. Evans. At the same time, he was a "licensed exhorter" and founder of a rural church, Manning's Chapel, where he no doubt saved for the Lord a number of souls whose land and cotton he had saved for himself.

As the Manning sons grew up, the family influence spread even further into politics, religion, and journalism. Robert Manning (b. 1864), for instance, was a frequent Democratic committeeman, and served as Postmaster of Ashland during both Cleveland administrations. Michael N. Manning (b. 1866), the second son, was a lawyer, an habitual Methodist conventioneer and "District Steward," and more significantly was editor from 1890 to 1894 of the Ashland weekly, the Clay County Advance. Thus it was that through political, economic, and marital alliances the Mannings, Evanses, and a few other families were able to establish their grip on Clay County institutions. At all times, moreover, the oligarchy based its growing power on the efficacy of the rural Bourbon trinity: the crop lien system, bloody-shirt Democracy, and control of the Methodist and Baptist churches.
Joseph C. Manning, had he been so inclined, could have been the chief ornament of the Manning family. He was a bright, devout child who attended Sunday School "with exactitude" and "was anxious even to go to school." The Manning home was one of considerable culture, where books and music fitted a succession of sons and daughters for a place in society. Young Joe, furthermore, was a natural leader and politician with a gift for pleasing those whom he wanted to please. "It took either mumps or measles . . . to keep me from being present where the crowd was," he recalled, and added: "There was a sort of drawing quality to me in this thing of where the others were." In future times of deadly serious political struggle, the voters would remember his piano-harmonica recitals, or best of all, "the parade and mimic circus, with dogs for lions and bull yearlings for elephants" which Joey had staged on Saturday afternoons.

For all his appealing ways, however, there was about young Manning a Tom Sawyer quality which got him into trouble. He was, for example, a talented impersonator who mocked (and played practical jokes on) many of the women in Ashland. In school he occupied the awkward position of being a spontaneous humorist who took ideas seriously. Worse, from the standpoint of his teachers and parents, he lacked reverence for society as it was. In all, he described himself as "a restive and active chap" who "just had to explode at something." Nor were spankings or "a flogging once and awhile at school" omitted when Joseph showed his non-conformist streak, which he awkwardly referred to as a frequent "self-expression at variance with the views or rules of behavior set down for me by parents and teachers."
Where his brothers were concerned, Manning's chief "variance" was in his opinion of the masses of the people. There is evidence that Henry A. Manning was kindly and paternalistic toward "his" farmer, but his two oldest sons were haughty men. Joe, on the other hand, "was a mixer, and spoke to everybody." Readily absorbing the democratic manners of the plain folk, he became "a fraternizing good fellow with them, naturally and from the heart." Partly in reaction to the snobbery of his brothers, but following the dictates of his conscience, Manning understood that his "sympathies were with the man at the bottom." With characteristic independence, moreover, he decided not "to blindly follow anyone simply because he was at the top."16

With the rest of his social education, Joseph Manning acquired an automatic racism. He was a student of mankind whose first studies were conducted among a people who knew the black man chiefly through the medium of Democratic propaganda. In addition, many of the hill folk, slipping into sharecropper status, seized upon the Negro as a scapegoat for the declining prosperity of agriculture. The argument was that the freedman, shiftless and venal, monopolized the best lands by virtue of his connection with the former slaveholding class. Blacks allegedly sold their votes and their souls for an easy life, while white men lived in poverty. As Manning noted, the song "'I'd rather be a Negro than a poor white man' . . . told volumes of the exact status of poor whites."18

Yet this merchant's son imbibed no bitterness against blacks. Significantly, his "first distinct contact and memory of a Colored
individual" was that of a Mrs. Garrison, a laundress, who ministered to some of his playground cuts and scrapes. Race relations in Ashland were ordinarily placid, because most of the miniscule black population worked for wages in carefully defined positions. Manning recalled two "Colored friends," one a woodchopper, "a sturdy, settled good citizen," and George Ed, a ditcher and banjo player who worked or strummed "with equal severity of purpose." Joseph enjoyed the equality and comradeship permissible between a white boy and a black man of "good habits." He was "a George Ed partisan" and the two "stood in with each other all right." 19 Certainly this complex little boy was the product of a racist culture, but his lack of hatred and his fond memories would, in the atmosphere of a reform ideology yet to be born, provide grounds for a democratic approach to biracial politics.

When he was about fourteen years old, Manning began the process of intellectual growth which would take him out of Clay County. His chief liberator was a young lawyer and Baptist preacher from South Carolina, W.R. Whatley, who in addition to his other duties edited the Clay County Advance. In all probability Whatley bought some of his equipment from H.A. Manning, who had backed a previous newspaper, the Ashland Banner, but it speedily became apparent that the new editor was willing to criticize the county political machine. Talented and popular, Whatley was able to stay with the Advance for several years. His tenure, relatively long for that of a country journalist, is evidence of the independent spirit of Clay County's farmers, who never regarded the Democratic Party as a sacred institution. 20
Whatever Deacon Manning's political differences with Whatley, Joseph evidently spent a good deal of time at the Advance office. For the first time he was exposed to an outsider who "was a thinker and a student, ... liberal and broad-minded." Just as he had accepted instinctively the goodness of the common man, Manning learned to reject the pretensions of Judge Hiram Evans, the local political boss "who essayed to be cock-of-the-walk, bell weather, the great I am, forefront of Ashland and Clay County." In opposition to Evans' arrogant insistence upon Democratic conformity, Whatley taught "a charitable vision toward the human family, ... neither narrow nor bigoted." The young newspaperman did not, however, confine himself to lofty statements of principle. In the legislative race of 1886, he actively promoted the candidacy of Independent Democrat Henry Clay Simmons. Simmons, an eloquent country schoolteacher, won the election by "excoriating Judge Evans ... [and] the high and mighty courthouse ring." Overall, Whatley was a powerful example of moral and social insurgency to Manning, whose rebelliousness now began to take a definite shape. In all probability, recognizing the talent and drive latent in his protégé, the editor urged him to complete his education at a school better than those available in Clay County. Joseph, as it chanced, had a sister living in Florence, Alabama, where there was a state college. Already "at heart against" the county establishment, he was anxious to go. In the summer of 1886, at age sixteen, he left for Florence Normal School in the far-off Tennessee Valley, where he would take considerable strides in the direction of what Bourbon Alabama defined as radicalism.
At school, Manning gravitated to the Literary (as opposed to the Normal, or teacher-training) Department. There he studied rhetoric and debating, grammar, literature, and political history. Under the supervision of President T.J. Mitchell, a genuine Ph.D., he set out to broaden his intellectual perspective. He was able to do so, in part, because Florence had long been accustomed to the proximity and activities of nonconformists. Not far from Lauderdale County, in which Florence was located, militant unionists had seceded from the Confederacy to form the "Free State of Winston" County, and the Republican Party remained strong throughout the area. In the 1870's and 1880's, Greenbackers, Independents, and agrarians vied with the Democratic Party for supremacy. Under such conditions Manning's experience may well have been different from that of the average Southern college student. Encouraged by some of his teachers, by his friend W.R. Whatley, and by his brother-in-law E.W. Jones, a Methodist minister who gave "good advice, but without a lecturing attitude," Joseph began a program of reading which he was to continue for years.

During or shortly after his college career, Manning discovered Hinton R. Helper's *Impending Crisis of the South* (1857). Helper was a North Carolinian who, filled with class and racial hatreds, had aspired to speak on behalf of the masses of Southern yeomen. His argument, backed up by a plausible statistical analysis, was that the persistence of the plantation system undermined the prosperity of the South as a whole; that the staple crop economy discouraged industry and trade, and therefore limited the opportunities of the common people. Ranging from economics to politics Helper further
asserted, in the words of one author, "that the slaveholding oligarchy had conspired to keep the poor whites in a dependent, illiterate condition." For Manning, who had grown up in a period of Bourbon (often ex-Confederate) consolidation of governmental power and planter and merchant consolidation of land-holdings, The Impending Crisis was more than an outdated polemic; it was a means of interpreting post-war society. At the same time, though Helper's socio-political "arraignment of the slave-holding Democratic Party system" became an article of Joseph's reformist faith, he was less deeply affected by the jaundiced racism of The Impending Crisis. Unlike Helper, who was a violent Negrophobe, he generally confined his racism to the then-current belief that both before and after slavery there were some advantages that the Colorad people had with all [their] disadvantages and hardships. Many of them had their white folks to whom they could look. They could get by through service, . . . [but] the poor white was white and too proud for this.

As he pursued his studies, Manning was confirmed in his anti-planter, anti-Democratic biases by the periodic revival of congressional debate over the Blair, or "National Aid to Education" Bill. Sponsored by Senator Henry W. Blair of New Hampshire, the measure would have authorized the government to grant $77 million for educational purposes over an eight-year period, the money to be divided among the states in proportion to their varying rates of illiteracy. The South, with by far the nation's highest percentage of illiterate, would have been the chief beneficiary of the Blair Bill. But because the proposal involved federal intervention in an area of state responsibility and because it provided for equitable expenditure of funds among black and white children, a number of
Southern Democrats opposed it. In Alabama, for instance, Third District Congressman W.C. Oates, the representative of the south-eastern "Wiregrass" counties, opposed the Blair Bill on constitutional and social grounds. Oates, moreover, was not willing to uplift the majority of children of either race. "Universal experience teaches," he noted, "that if a boy, regardless of his color, be educated beyond [primary school,] he declines ever to work another day in the sun." Large numbers of Alabamians, however, supported federal aid to education. "Fighting Joe" Wheeler, Congressman for the eighth (Tennessee Valley) district, received in the mid-1880's a steady stream of letters from members of all political parties, urging him to avoid "narrow constricted views of state lines" in the matter.27

Manning favored the Blair Bill wholeheartedly and may have defended it, in meetings of the Normal School's Lafayette Debating Society, as "one way out for the ignorant white South and [for] the education of the colored." In later years, certainly, he was convinced that improved school systems would have been a crucial factor in "break[ing] up the hotbed of political despotism that was set up in the structure of ignorance." Perhaps because of its great potential the Blair Bill, passed by the Senate in 1884, 1886, and 1888, was repeatedly defeated in the House by what Manning called a combination of "Southern politicians and . . . Northern politicians who were desirous of just letting things alone." For the rest of his life, he regarded "the failure . . . of that measure [as] a tragedy," and as a major example of "the indifference of the Bourbon Democratic South" to the welfare of the common folk.28
In the spring of 1888, Joseph Manning graduated with "high honors" but without a profession. Though he was a confirmed opponent of Bourbon rule, he was probably not yet committed to a life of political activism. It is difficult to say whether he was, at this time, deeply influenced by the waves of agrarian revolt which were sweeping across the South in the late 1880's. In northwest Alabama the leadership of an influential farmer's organization, the Agricultural Wheel, had broken with the Democratic Party by 1888. Across the Tennessee River from Florence the Molton State Wheel, in backing the Union Labor Party, advocated Henry George's Single Tax and the distribution of government land among the people, and promoted an interracial coalition among farmers and workers. Manning could not have been oblivious to these developments; rather it is likely that he was absorbed in college work, and too inexperienced to take a direct part in politics. His years of relative inactivity, though, were drawing to a close.

After graduation Joseph went to Texas, where as an agent of a "book syndicate" he "spent a year traveling through the South and reading books that were valuable to me." One of the works he particularly enjoyed was James G. Blaine's Twenty Years in Congress, which he studied carefully because it helped him "to know the Northern viewpoint." Nowhere does Manning explain why or where he chose to base his work in Texas, although he did have relatives (and possibly a sweetheart) in that state. Nevertheless, by journeying to the west he was entering a region of intense intellectual and social ferment; for Texas was the geographical center of the Farmer's Alliance,
an order larger and more vibrant than the Agricultural Wheel. After
the publication of its "Cleburne Demands" of 1886, the Texas
Alliance was on the verge of a momentous campaign of Southern organi­
zation based on its Greenback-inflationist analysis of the cure for
agricultural depression, and the hope spread by its cooperative
business ventures. Though this union of producers was officially
non-partisan, radicals such as the Texan Evan Jones did not hesitate to
predict a future of increasing political involvement for the order.
Manning, then, was traveling through Texas and the South simultaneously
with a large body of agrarian lecturers, organizers, and missiona­
ries. He never says whether he ever joined the Alliance or one of its
auxiliaries—but at some point he was converted to Alliance doctrine. 31

Manning returned to Alabama shortly after the Alliance's Ocala
conference (December, 1890) had deferred independent political
organization, pending a year of preparation among the farmers of the
South. Agrarian strategists knew that the Democratic Party would never
embrace the "socialistic" Ocala Platform; yet if enough support could
be marshalled for the chief demand—government issuance of fiat money
and credit under the Subtreasury Plan—then Bourbon intransigence
would place a powerful weapon in the hands of Third Party men. 32 In
Alabama, state President Samuel M. Adams mounted a successful drive
for acceptance of the Ocala demands at the grass-roots level.
Presumably Manning was in sympathy with Adams' efforts; in the
spring of 1891 he briefly considered founding a pro-Alliance newspaper
in the Calhoun County boom-town of Anniston, where the local order gave
its "cheerful" endorsement of the Subtreasury. But Manning, who had not
yet declared himself in favor of a Third Party, answered the call
to a larger boom-town before any serious insurgency developed in his home state. By the fall of 1891, looking for newspaper work, he had migrated to Atlanta. 33

Joseph came to town armed with letters praising "his fitness for journalistic work," and secured a position rewriting news stories for the American Press Association, a predecessor of the modern-day wire services. His duties brought him into contact with journalists and public figures, but left him opportunities to "keep up my contact with the plain people." This he did by attending labor rallies and Alliance picnics in the city's hinterland where, to his delight, he found a whirlwind of activity and new insight into the political implications of his principles. 34

Agrarian politics in Georgia were complex. In 1890 the farmers had seemingly triumphed with the election of an entire slate of "Alliance Democrats." But the subsequent inactivity of the legislature and elected officials negated the victory and divided the state Alliance into two factions, one grouped around Democratic loyalist Lon Livingston, the other around Tom Watson, a fervent advocate of "the politics of the Subtreasury." 35 As Manning remembered him, Watson was "a man of unusual literary attainment . . . and fluency as a speaker," who "poured forth excommunication upon the opposition." The judgement was essentially accurate. In a heated "campaign of education" in 1891-1892, the red-headed Georgian acted as a catalyst for independent political action among men and women who had already struggled together for the success—or preservation—of their co-operative enterprises. As a result of his dynamism, the great
majority of Alliancemen were imbued with the faith that workers and farmers, black and white, South and West could free themselves from the influence of the "old parties" and the old sectionalistic politics, and wage a common fight for common interests. This was Populism, the culmination of the agrarian "movement culture." 36

As it was for so many others, the autumn of 1891 was for J.C. Manning a time of decision. As a defender of the Ocala Platform, he had denounced the "indifference and failure" of conservative businessmen and politicians in meeting the plight of the South's "wealth producers." Now Watson's People's Party Paper awakened in him, with thrilling urgency, "the conclusion that the only hope for the South was political union with the West." The Alliance demands were revealed as "a well-defined program for future action, which foretold the course of independent politics," and the proposed Third Party seemed a logical "outcome of the Alliance." Most important of all, Manning had come to believe that he was taking part in a movement which would transform all of society. As Suballiances and county chapters declared for the People's Party by the dozen, he perceived the nature of this tumultuous change in Georgia politics and concluded: "It amounts to revolution." 37

Once he was committed to reform "by the agency of the People's Party," Manning began to take an active part. At age twenty-one, judging by surviving photographs, he was slim and sandy-haired, with an aquiline face and eyes which could assume either a dreamy or a determined expression. There must have been, in addition, something stirring in his voice, for one of his first speeches was an impromptu outpouring of emotion before a November or December 1891
worker's meeting, which "brought down the house" and earned him an honorary membership in the Atlanta Trades Council. As he received congratulations, the young man who was soon to be known as "the Boy Orator" knew what his future would be: "I had found myself," he wrote of the moment. By February 1892, Manning was a leading speaker in the Atlanta People's Party Club, where he "made a happy and timely hit by an eloquent reference to the able efforts of Thos. E. Watson in behalf of the toiling masses," followed by a "graphic description of the oppressions of the people." Soon he was making stump speeches at Flat Rock and Douglasville, explaining the decisions reached at the St. Louis Conference (February 20-22, 1892), at which the existence of a strong People's Party was assured.

In a brief span of time Joseph Manning had grown from rebellious child to committed reformer. Still, the ideology of Populism as he understood and enunciated it was closely tied to his sympathetic impressions of the stolid hill folk he loved:

They have toiled, endured, economized and said nothing until their forbearance had become a farce. And now they have pretty generally come to understand that their amelioration depends largely upon their own fraternal efforts.

Concerning the larger issues of Populist strategy—particularly that of an interracial class union urged by Watson and other "Midroad" radicals—Manning had undergone a heightening of consciousness, thus commencing a process of gradual racial enlightenment which would continue the rest of his life:

It seems to me that the white people of the South and North who can look with complacency upon this spectacle of a race of former slaves but recently liberated, being forced into a state of want and hunger
that makes them willing to work for any wages... must surely be unmindful of their own welfare.41

For all his education, travels and experience, Manning was fighting a monster he had perceived and hated at home. His father's son understood the connectedness of rural institutions:

The fellow the supply merchant furnished goods to was his farmer, and there was a feeling of political ownership. That was a thing I wanted to see smashed.42
Footnotes to Chapter T


3. The chief crops grown in Clay County were corn and cotton and in some cases, sorghum cane for syrup. In 1880, 20 per cent of Clay County farms were operated by sharecroppers, not counting as sharecroppers those farmers who paid a fixed monetary rent. By 1890, the proportion had risen to 36.5 per cent. Figures for 1870 are not available in the Alabama State Department of Archives and History (hereinafter cited as ADAH). See the Tenth Census, 1880, III, Statistics of Agriculture, 30-31, and the 11th Census, 1890, III Statistics of Agriculture, 34. Allen Johnston Going, Bourbon Democracy in Alabama, 1874-1890 (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1951), 95, estimates that 80-90 per cent of Alabama farmers used the crop lien as their basic credit resource. For a discussion of yeomen-planter class hostility during Reconstruction, see W.E.B. DuBois, Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880 (New York: Atheneum Press, 1970), 488.

4. Manning, Five to Twenty-Five, 83, 10, 12-14, and Virginia Van Der Veer Hamilton, Hugo Black: The Alabama Years (Baton Rouge: Louisians State University Press, 1972), 6-7, 19. The late Supreme Court justice was born in Clay County in 1886, and knew Joseph Manning; Hugo Black's father, Fayette Black, was a supply merchant, landowner, and Democrat like H.A. Manning. In general the Clay County yeomen supported the Democratic Party from the mid-1870's until the agrarian campaigns of the 1890's. After the final Democratic "Redemption" of the state in 1874, however, the Democracy was increasingly dominated by an upper-class coalition of Black Belt planter-merchants and North Alabama merchant-landlords. See Dodd and Dent, Historical Atlas of Alabama, 67-68, Going, Bourbon Democracy in Alabama, 214-231, and Howard Odum, Gladstone H. Yeuell, and Charles G. Summersell, Alabama, Past and Future (Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1941), 127-129.
5. Owen, *Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, I, 275-276; see also Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, 488-489, and Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 83-85. It is impossible to tell whether H.A. Manning was a unionist during the Civil War, or whether he ever considered supporting the Republican Party. After 1874, though, it was to his interest to support the Democratic Party in the county and state— and he did so. See the Clay County Probate Records: "Deed Records, 'A,' 'B,' and 'C,'" passim, and "Minutes of Probate Court, Will Record 'A,'" 226. See also Manning, *Five To Twenty-Five*, 6-9.

6. Clay County Probate Records: "Deed-Mortgage Record, 'C,'" 512-514, and "Direct and Reverse Index to Records of Deeds and Mortgages, 'C,'" passim. Estimates of the exorbitant rates charged by Clay County merchants in Hamilton, Hugo Black, 10, conform to the analysis of Southern interest trends in Roger L. Hansom and Richard Sutch, *One Kind of Freedom: The Economic Consequences of Emancipation* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 126-132. See also the Ashland Clay County Advance, May 29, 1891, for an informative obituary of one of H.A. Manning's chief business partners, Merritt Street. For H.A. Manning's many lawsuits, see the Clay County Civil Court Records: "Appearance Docket No. 1," passim, and "Execution Docket No. 1," passim. Alabama's crop lien Law of 1871 gave planters or landowners a lien "superior" to those of merchants. Thus planter-suppliers, who were in the early 1870's concentrated in the Black Belt, had the right to cull a profit from the tenant farmer. This law, a stunning example of the continuity of anti-capitalist thought among Alabama politicians, had the effect of driving many non-landowning merchants into North Alabama, thus helping create the body of merchant-oligarchs to which Henry A. Manning belonged. The "oligarchy," therefore, was divided into planter and merchant contingents, though the county machines controlled by the two groups were, in the long run, staunchly Democratic and as such, allies. See Jonathan M. Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South: Alabama, 1860-1885* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1976), 77-102.

7. Owen, *Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, I, 275-276; see also Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, 488-489, and Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 83-85. It is impossible to tell whether H.A. Manning was a unionist during the Civil War, or whether he ever considered supporting the Republican Party. After 1874, though, it was to his interest to support the Democratic Party in the county and state—and he did so. See the Clay County Probate Records: "Deed Records, 'A,' 'B,' and 'C,'" passim, and "Minutes of Probate Court, Will Record 'A,'" 226. See also Manning, *Five To Twenty-Five*, 6-9.

8. Ashland United Methodist Church Records: "Complete Church Register, Lineville Circuit, 1880-1890." This earliest available church record lists H.A. Manning's name first for the whole county; the members of his congregation are listed in a block, numbers 514-527.
9. Owen, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, IV, 1156. See also the Ashland Clay County Advance, February 2, 1894. Also see the Ashland United Methodist Church Records: "Quarterly Conference Minute Books," I-IV (1887-1902), passim. For M.N. Manning's law and editorial careers, see the Ashland Clay County Advance, January 19, 1894 and 1891-1894, passim. A fourth son, H.A. Manning, Jr. (b. 1876), taught school in Clay County in the late 1890's, and subsequently went into the piano business in Atlanta and Raleigh, North Carolina. His obituary is filed in the Manning Family Biographical Folder Library, ADAH.


11. Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 6. Joseph Manning joined the church before he was ten years old. The "Complete Church Register" cited above, in 12, lists Joseph ahead even of his mother. The author learned that Henry A. Manning encouraged reading and music through interviews with James Gay, local historian, Ashland, October 8, 1976, and Mrs. Robert Stone Weatherly, daughter of M.N. Manning, Birmingham, March 5, 1977. Mrs. Weatherly remembered that her grandfather had brought the first pianos into Clay County. If Ashland merchant Fayette Black, is any indication, middle-class Alabamians were reading works by Sir Walter Scott and Victor Hugo in the 1880's and 1890's. See Manning, Hugo Black, 8-9.

12. Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 6-7, 57.

13. Ashland Clay County Advance, December 6, 13, 1895.

14. Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 6-7, 58. Joey Manning's behavior was comparable, if milder than that of young Milford W. Howard, future Populist leader and Congressman from Alabama's seventh district, who remembered that he had hated his father, and on one occasion cursed his mother because of the "terrible rebellion I felt in my soul." See Autobiography of M.W. Howard, typescript copy, n.d., 5-9, in possession of the Archival Division, Ralph Brown Draughon Library, Auburn University.

15. Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 56, 18. Further corroboration of M.N. Manning's character as a stern, cold man was provided in interviews with Miss Willie Welch, M.N.H.'s next-door neighbor, Talladega, Alabama, October 14, 17, 1976.

17. Ibid., 19. William Warren Rogers, in The One-Gallused Rebellion: Agrarianism in Alabama, 1865-1896 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970), 43, remarks of the Bourbons' "redemption" of the state from the Republican Party in 1874: "with the campaign based primarily on race, the Democrats also attracted the masses of the small white farmers."


20. Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 15-16. H.A. Manning provided the equipment for the Banner, which failed when its editor, one Tom Ellis, printed gossip and personalities. Joseph Manning served as a printer's devil for Ellis, and possibly for Whatley, who founded the Advance in 1883 or 1884. In 1890, M.N. Manning took over the Advance and turned it into an orthodox Democratic sheet.

21. Ibid., 16, 64. See also Owen, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, I, 276. It is not certain whether Simmons was a Greenbacker or inflationist in 1886.

22. Ibid., 17, 24. See attached map #1.

23. Ibid., 26. For a good article on the history, curriculum and presidents of Florence Normal School, see Owen, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, I, 596-598.


25. Degler, The Other South, 67-70, and Clement Eaton, A History of the Old South (2nd ed.; New York: MacMillan and Company, 1966), 353. Also see Manning, The Fadeout of Populism: Pot and Kettle in Combat (New York: T.A. Hebbons and Company, 1928), 21-22. Manning notes that by the time he began work for the People's Party in Alabama (1892) he was as familiar with the "political point of view" of William Lloyd Garrison and Abraham Lincoln as he was with that of Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis. He likewise analyses Helper's Impending Crisis, but does not say when he read it. Helper's work was widely read among the unionists of North Alabama, and it seems logical to believe that Manning was exposed to it at Florence.


28. J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 13, 1928, in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Papers, Library of Congress (hereinafter cited as LC), and Manning, *Five To Twenty-five, 24-26*; see also Crofts, "The Black Response to the Blair Education Bill," 44-49.

29. Birmingham Age Herald, April 6, 1892, Rogers, *One-Gallused Rebellion*, 122-130, and Going, *Bourbon Democracy*, 58-59, 223-230. In *Five To Twenty-Five*, 18, Manning says: "From the beginning it was just in me, I was never a Bourbon Democrat." Yet he fails to mention the Agricultural Wheel, Greenback Party or Union Labor Party in his autobiography. Nor is there any indication that he ever considered, before 1896, joining the Republican Party.


31. For information on the growth of the Alliance, and on Texas in the 1880's, see Lawrence Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 25-50, 78-90. Manning had relatives in Quanah and in Nacogdoches, Texas, according to information furnished by H.A. Manning to the Ashland Clay County Advance, August 28, September 4, October 16, 1891. Joseph Manning's future wife, Zoe Duncan, lived in Bartlett, Texas (they were married in 1894). An interview with Mrs. J.O. Lindsey, wife of Zoe D. Manning's first cousin J.O. Lindsey, in Alexander City, Alabama, January 6, 1978, indicated that the Duncan family had resided in North Tallapoosa County, not too far from Ashland, probably until the mid-1880's; Zoe and Joseph may have known each other before he finished college. Interestingly, Quanah, Nacogdoches, and Bartlett occupy positions on the northwestern, eastern, and southern fringes of the area in East Texas described by Goodwyn (Democratic Promise, 34-35) as "the base of the early Alliance."
Alabama newspaper sources are as silent as Manning himself concerning his Alliance membership. As a town resident, he may have joined one of the “Citizens’ Alliances” established for non-farmers who were sympathetic to the Alliance.

32. Ashland Clay County Advance, February 20, 1891. For information on the Subtreasury Plan, originally conceived by C.W. Macune of Texas, a political conservative, see Goodwyn, Democratic Promise, 225-243.

33. Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 188-192, the Ashland Clay County Advance, April 3, November 20, 27, 1891, and the Oxford Voice, April 17, 1891. According to M.N. Manning, Joseph wanted to name the (never-published) Calhoun County weekly The People’s War. Despite the militancy which this choice of name implies, it is doubtful that Manning was a Third Party man in the spring of 1891; even S.M. Adams viewed the Ocala demands as a program which should be enacted through a reformed Democracy. Further, it is likely that Joseph found it difficult to rebel openly against the Democratic Party while his father was alive; he loved his father deeply, though he hated much that his father stood for. It may not be a coincidence that within a few weeks after H.A. Manning’s death in November 1891, Joseph was openly a member of the People’s Party. See Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 56-57.

34. Ashland Clay County Advance, February 26, 1892, and Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 26-29. Manning met Clark Howell, editor of the Atlanta Constitution, and saw Governor David B. Hill of New York in October, 1891, when the latter dedicated the Henry W. Grady monument on Peachtree Street. Joseph distributed a story of the event as one of his first big assignments. A number of labor organizations, including the Order of Carpenters and Joiners and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, were making plans to honor H.W. Grady in October; Manning probably made friends with an assortment of union men while covering the story. See the Atlanta Constitution, October 13, 1891.

35. C. Vann Woodward, Tom Watson, Agrarian Rebel (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 185-205. Livingston, elected to congress in 1890 as an Alliance man, voted as a Democrat for Charles Crisp of Georgia for Speaker, though Crisp opposed the Alliance demands. This, in addition to the actions of many "Alliance" legislators who opposed the Subtreasury, divided the order in Georgia. Ultimately Livingston, who had been state president of the Alliance, was repudiated by a pro-Populist majority. See Manning, Fadeout, 16-17.

37. Manning, Fadeout, 16, 40, the Atlanta People's Party Paper, November 26, December 24, 1891, January 7, 14, 28, 1892, the Birmingham Age-Herald, April 6, 1892, the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, April 28, 1892, and the Butler Choctaw Alliance, May 2, 1892. See also Goodwyn, Democratic Promise, 249-253.

38. Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 27. Youthful photographs of Manning can be found as the frontispiece of Five To Twenty-Five, as the frontispiece of Joseph C. Manning, Politics of Alabama (Birmingham, Alabama: By the Author, 1893), and in the Montgomery Colored Alabamian, October 26, 1907. The Trades Council was the central forum of organized labor in Atlanta. Populists were trying hard to bring the workers into a political coalition.


40. Atlanta People's Party Paper, March 17, 1892.

41. Ibid., March 24, 1892. This quotation is taken from a "letter from a commercial traveler" which Manning may have written. It is dated from Birmingham at a time when Manning was on a journey to Alabama, and signed "Rhadamantus."

42. Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 32.
CHAPTER II

THE UNCERTAIN BEGINNINGS OF
THE PEOPLE'S PARTY IN ALABAMA

Joseph Manning remembered the period after the St. Louis convention as a time of "bringing into fruition, putting into being what had been agreed upon . . . for many months." This was a crucial time in his life. In March 1892, he was a respected lecturer for a political organization that was increasingly a model and guide for state organization in the deep South. Georgia Populists, correspondingly, were interested in the progress of agrarian politics across the region and Joseph, naturally, was especially concerned with events in Alabama. About this time, in fact, he began writing "once in a while" for the People's Party Paper, and took occasion to distribute the weekly in Alabama, and particularly in Clay County, by mail. Still in March, he accepted an assignment to scout the territory between Atlanta and Birmingham as the "special correspondent" of the PPP.

The prospects for a successful agrarian reform of Alabama, Manning reported, were mixed. The subtreasury campaign of the previous year had "taken," and since that time "it is no unusual thing to find farmers well up on issues which heretofore it was thought only statesmen could understand." Joseph was confident that the Alabama Alliance would soon ratify the St. Louis platform, but he was disturbed to find so few Alliance men engaged in political organization.

Time was passing, and no People's Party movement seemed to be in sight:
The politicians in Alabama are in a fair way to down the Alliance, and unless some aggressive and active step is taken their cause is probably lost, and the reign of dictatorial politicians will continue.

Though he did not yet understand the complexities of Alabama politics, Manning was correct in his assessment. A few cells of Populism had sprung up in Alabama in 1891, and by March 1892, some basic organization was going forward in north Alabama under the direction of George Gaither, a veteran of the Union Labor Party. But at the time of Manning's visit, those few Populist clubs which existed were handicapped by a lack of administrative talent (Gaither in particular was a notably inefficient leader), and by the abiding conservatism of the state Alliance. As late as August 1891, the important "Brundidge" convention of the Alliance had specifically requested the cessation of Third Party activity within the order. By the spring of 1892, moreover, most of the prominent Alliancemenn in Alabama, including state president Samuel M. Adams, were stumping the state for gubernatorial candidate Reuben F. Kolb, the staunch Democrat who had served as State Commissioner of Agriculture from 1887 to 1891. The situation in Alabama, therefore, was quite different from that in Georgia, where dynamic radicals had built the People's Party upon a decisive split within the Alliance. Ideological reform in Alabama was in danger of being smothered by the popularity of one of "the politicians," a condition which constituted one of Joseph Manning's chief obstacles when he returned a second time, in April, as chief organizer of the People's Party.

Up to a point, as one historian has written, Reuben Kolb's life reads like a New South success story. Returning to his plantation in
Black Belt Barbour County after the Civil War, Kolb helped "redeem" the state from Republican rule in 1874. Like hundreds of Bourbon gentlemen during this period, Kolb (or so his enemies later charged) was willing to condone the widespread ballot-stuffing "necessary" to effect that transition.\(^7\) Agriculturally, however, Kolb was exceptional in his early realization that cotton culture was leading the South to disaster, and in his early and successful shift to truck-farming and plant breeding. By the early 1880's, if not before, Kolb's vegetables and melons were nationally famous and "the Genial Reuben," as he was called, had established his reputation as one of the foremost scientific farmers in the South.\(^8\)

In 1883, the Alabama legislature created the office of state Commissioner of Agriculture as an appointive position. Kolb, motivated as he would be in the future by a sincere ideal of service as well as by political ambition, was a candidate for the job. He failed to muster enough support the first time around, but when the post fell vacant in 1887, his reputation and connections had increased to the point that he was easily appointed by Governor Thomas Seay.\(^9\) Thus Reuben Kolb began his duties at a time when the Farmer's Alliance, on which he was to have such impact was beginning its great expansion in Alabama and the South.

While he was commissioner, Kolb supported the organizational and cooperative activities of the Alliance. In particular, he sponsored a number of all-day farmers' institutes which dispensed the latest
agricultural techniques to farmers, for which purpose he often employed Alliance Lecturers. Newspapermen and Bourbon politicians noticed, however, that one of the chief attractions of the institutes was the frequent attendance of the Commissioner himself. Certainly, Kolb's growing popularity in the late 1880's resulted in part from his utilization of these educational events as "the best, cheapest and most powerful means of electioneering ... that ever existed in the world." By 1889, when he was appointed to his second two year term, it was widely known that "the Genial Reuben" wanted to be governor, with Alliance help. That year he wrote to the influential North Carolina Alliance-man Leonidas L. Polk that "friends all over the state [are] working up a strong feeling in my behalf." He was confident, he wrote, that the small farmers would "unite to a man" upon him in 1890.

Yet Kolb was not anxious for the Alliance "to run a candidate solely as a farmer candidate," and in fact he sought support from diverse groups. Most especially, he was fearful of dividing the Democratic Party, a position consistent with his previous political stance. Throughout his career in the "party of the fathers," and as late as the tumultuous gubernatorial campaign of 1892, Kolb maintained that agrarian sympathies need not conflict with the "Jeffersonian" conservatism of states-rights Democracy. He fiercely defended his association with the Alliance with the qualification that "no true Allianceman could be anything but a Democrat." During his tours, moreover, Kolb "paraded the fact of belonging to the Alliance," while boasting: "It only makes me a better Democrat."
The accelerating radicalism of the regional Alliance, coinciding with his rise to favor in the state order, caused Reuben Kolb considerable anxiety. Nor was he alone in his concern for the effects of the Alliance's "platforms" on the Democracy. After the Subtreasury was introduced at a St. Louis meeting in 1889, a worried north Alabama Bourbon predicted that Kolb was sure to be nominated for governor at the next convention, and briefly gave the reason for his conviction: "under the guise of Alliance men . . . the radicals have captured our party." Over a year later, after the Ocala demands had become official doctrine, the wealthy Allianceman H.H. Hall of Elmore County bemoaned the farmers' loyalty to "Kolbite" leaders like Albert T. Goodwyn of that county, loyalty which Hall termed a repudiation of "trusted leaders whose heads have grown white while guiding the old Democratic ship into the harbor of white supremacy."^15

Guilt by association was emphatically not for Reuben Kolb. In addition, therefore, to frequent disclaimers that "if the Alliance does not mean Democracy, then I do not want to belong to it," he took steps in 1889-1890 to promote political orthodoxy among agrarians. Despite the secret, non-partisan character of the Alliance, the Commissioner several times supplied Democratic congressman Joseph Wheeler with lists of the secretaries of "Primary Alliances" across the state, presumably to facilitate the distribution of campaign literature in those "Force Bill" years. Kolb thus joined a sizeable body of conservative Alabamians anxious, in the words of a Birmingham corporation lawyer, "to keep out of the Alliance all dogmas repugnant to Democratic teachings."^17
But Kolb's maneuverings won him no advancement in the "Democratic and Conservative" Party of Alabama. Fearing any mobilization of small farmers, the ruling Black Belt-Big Mule coalition closed ranks in 1890. Thus, though Kolb went into the state convention of that year with solid farm support and a commanding delegate lead, he was defeated when a "cabal" of his opponents united behind an ultra-conservative lawyer for the Louisville and Nashville road, Thomas Goode Jones. Though "the Genial Reuben" accepted his fate with temporary good grace, the wirepulling nature of the affair enraged his supporters among the "wool-hat boys," whose delegates had stood by Kolb with "pathetic loyalty and sublime steadfastness . . . for thirty-four long ballots." This convention of 1890 established among Democratic Alliancemen a sense of identification with Kolb's fortunes, a sense which blossomed into intra-party warfare during the next year when Jones succeeded in turning the Commissioner out of his office, in favor of a "loyal" man.

With his political survival clearly at stake, therefore, Kolb roared into the campaign of 1892. Charging that Jones was a usurper of the popular will, Kolb and his supporters made the preconvention fight into an ultimate "contest between Alliance and anti-Alliance men," as one of the governor's correspondents put it. While the Montgomery Advertiser and a host of Bourbon sheets heaped vilification on his head, the ex-Commissioner saw his popularity rise to its highest point, as debt-ridden farmers rallied to their "martyred" candidate. As a worried Jones supporter wrote: "There are some here who would vote for Kolb if he was to steal a sheep and they even saw him do it."
With Jones' men in control of the state government and the Democratic Party machinery, however, Reuben Kolb was fighting against hopeless odds. This became apparent as early as March when, in the midst of a tight delegate race, the Bourbon state executive committee ruled that it would decide upon the merits of all contested delegation cases. This decisive assumption of a "power not conferred ... by the people" sparked an immediate response from the Kolb camp, in the form of preparations for a conservative insurgency. With the advice of Frank Baltzell, brilliant editor of the Montgomery Alliance Herald, Kolb planned to fight the ruling and its inevitable consequences in the convention, which was set for the first week of June. Cheated there, he would bolt, presenting himself as a "Simon-Pure Jeffersonian Democrat" battling against an elitist clique. At the time that Joseph Manning was reporting to the Georgia Populists on conditions in Alabama, Kolb's spokesmen were claiming fraud in the selection of delegates from nine counties, and a long-time observer of Democratic politics commented: "This war of factions within our party has become so fierce and bitter, and has engendered feelings so intensely hostile, that the man who should interpose ... would be ground between the upper and nether millstones." 

While these developments were keeping the eyes of Allancemen riveted upon the Democratic Party, the leadership of the state Alliance was caught between another set of grindstones. Both S.M. Adams and his colleague Warren S. Reese—the latter a former mayor of Montgomery who headed Alabama's urban "Citizens' Alliance"—were staunch Kolb men, but the advanced platform adopted at St. Louis
in February had forced their hands. Handicapped by a membership unprepared for genuine political independence, these Alliance leaders were only embarrassed by the Populist fervor of the national order. Adams put off consideration of the St. Louis platform until late March when, spurred perhaps by Manning, he issued a call "for all labor organizations" to send delegates to Birmingham on May 10, "to decide on some course of action."

Samuel Adams was a complex figure, an authentic financial radical who, somewhat after the manner of C.W. Mcune, never lost his residual devotion to "the party of the fathers" and white supremacy. As Kolb's most important backer, Adams simultaneously offended business-oriented Bourbons with his working-class rhetoric and insured, by his conduct of the Alliance, that Kolb would be the only agrarian candidate who had a chance to be governor in 1892. Adams' influence was particularly evident during the August 1891 state Alliance convention at Brundidge, Alabama, where a mammoth procession testified to the solidarity of agrarians, and where the Alliance voted its "complete endorsement" of the Ocala demands. Yet these same farmers chose a single corn cob for their symbol—thus leaving no doubt as to their political preference—and with the blessing of Adams and Reese requested those few local Alliances which had formed People's Party clubs to disband them.

Still, Adams had to deal with a sizeable minority of Alliancesmen who plainly could have been led, whatever their affection for Kolb, into the Third Party. About the time of the Brundidge convention, a Clay County farmer spoke for a good many Alabamians when he wrote
to the Alliance Herald that "the sons of toil must be true to principle as far superior to party loyalty," and concluded only half humorously:

We are laboring in a strictly non-partisan spirit to bring about a party for support of Alliance demands . . . We can never get this support from goats that wear sheep's hides, . . . [but] the time is near when we must examine these hides; and those who do not stand squarely on the Ocala platform, among their wool we may find the goat hair.27

Because his own mind was painfully divided between principle and party, Samuel Adams behaved in a paradoxical fashion after the People's Party became a reality. While Lon Livingston of Georgia confidently counted him as one of the state presidents opposed to the new party, Adams continued to give fiat money speeches in the most radical counties of Alabama. In Calhoun County, a center of Populist activity since 1891, he posed a provocative question to an Alliance rally: "Have either the Democratic or Republican parties been the friend of the people for the last twenty years?" There as elsewhere, however, Adams brought his listeners up to the brink of political independence, but refused to endorse any course of action other than one of continued struggle within the Democracy. As the puzzled pro-Jones reporter who covered the speech wrote: "He is not in favor of the so-called Third Party, from the way he talked."28 As it chanced, Adams decided to stick with the certain candidacy of that artful equivocator Kolb, and it would be nearly six months before he declared for the People's Party openly. But in immediate terms, Adams' life was further complicated when in April 1892, Joseph Manning came home to stay.

Manning announced that he had come to Birmingham "on party business." It was one of his few cautious remarks but it was true,
for he had come to save Alabama for the People's Party. To the
Populist leaders of Georgia and ultimately, to Leonidas L. Polk, who
was by this time president of the Southern Farmer's Alliance and a
leading contender for the Populist presidential nomination, Joseph
must have seemed a logical choice for this nearly impossible job.
He knew and loved the plain folk of his home state. He was one of the
best stump speakers in Atlanta, and he knew how to transform wavering
into Populists "ready and anxious to take action toward organization."²⁹
If youthful impetuosity could capture the Alabama Alliance from the
conservatives, Manning was capable of the task—despite strategic
obstacles which Tom Watson never faced, and which Joseph himself
only half understood.

One of the first people Manning saw was Samuel Adams, who took
refuge in ambiguity in order to avoid "being drawn out of his intentions
a little early" (as Chappell Cory, Democratic editor of the Birmingham
Age-Herald, astutely guessed).³⁰ The two men had an "interesting
talk" which revealed, as Manning said, that Adams "had lost all
hope of securing legislation beneficial to the people through the
Democratic Party." Though Adams, typically, would commit himself
no further, he somehow imparted to the young missionary the erroneous
belief that he (Adams) planned to lead the Alliance into the People's
Party no later than the Birmingham "labor" conference scheduled for
May 30.³¹

But Joseph Manning, in his ebullience and naiveté, committed
worse beginner's mistakes than putting an optimistic interpretation
upon the oscillations of Samuel Adams. In the whirl of talks with Adams
and other Alliancemcn which he undertook in April, Joseph allowed
himself to underestimate the talent and ambition of Reuben Kolb. At a time when Kolb was deep in plans for his Jeffersonian Democratic Party, a hybrid of agrarian resentment and Bourbon loyalism which could, as he wrote a friend, "carry with us a large element that would not go if [it were] called a Third or People's Party," Manning was reassuring the People's Party Paper: "It is thought that Captain Kolb, the Alliance candidate, will withdraw from the campaign before the nominating convention convenes."32

If Manning was prone to mistakes and errors of judgment at this early stage of his career, his contagious enthusiasm attracted attention, stimulated a nascent People's Party sentiment, and injected a more national perspective into the political life of Alabama. In an interview with the Age-Herald, for instance, Manning bluntly denounced the "Bloody Shirt" mentality of the Democratic Party and, with implicit faith in the people, predicted an end to it. "Sectionalism and such prejudices will not count in this fight," he said, and emphasized: "These are dead issues." A live issue, as he went on to remind Alliancemen caught up in the Kolb-Jones battle, was that of "relief," which could come only "through the Ocala and St. Louis demands enforced through political action." Admitting that "the work of education has not been carried out to the extent in this state that it has been in Georgia," Joseph was confident that his message of insurgency would find a receptive audience. "The strength of the movement in this state," he predicted, "will shake it from one end to the other, when the People's Party supporters arise and put on their armor."33 To Chappell Cory, Manning seemed to be an unknown catalyst precipitated into Alabama at a moment of unpredictable possibility.
A few days later, the worried editor summed him up as such:

You would not think to look at him that he could revolutionize politics, but in these restless times one boyish youngster can do harm that years cannot wholly do away.

Joseph Manning understood perfectly well that there were grassroots stirrings of the People's Party in Alabama. He had come to "give the word" to Populists and launch a coordinated campaign.

Fittingly enough, the first and most dramatic response to his efforts took place on the courthouse square in Ashland. Clay County Alliance-men had expressed their official disapproval of Judge Hiram Evans and his machine as early as 1890. Manning, for his part, had sown this ground with bundles of the People's Party Paper, and was delighted that an impulse toward political insurgency seemed to have "taken" there. In particular, "Professor" Henry Clay Simmons, former Independent politician and friend of Manning's youth, had become a "Straightout" Populist just waiting for a chance to exercise his oratorical talents on behalf of the new cause.

Simmons' chance came on April 8, when Reuben Kolb came to Ashland to deliver a campaign speech. Kolb was met there by over 600 Alliance-men, but the famous candidate could not have known that most of these men, "thoroughly stirred up on political matters" by Simmons and a cell of committed Populists, had come to town inclined toward "the purpose of organizing a Third Party." Kolb therefore delivered his standard speech, in which he claimed to represent "the common masses of the people" and "roundly denounced" his detractors. In conclusion, he firmly announced that he "did not propose to be governed by the action of any partisan committee" while, unfortunately for him, he stressed
his sincere loyalty to the Democratic Party. The speech was not
applauded. Instead, H.C. Simmons delivered a short, stinging re-
buttal in which he chided Kolb for "sticking to an organization as he pictured the Democratic Party to be," and advised the crowd
that the would-be governor "was not the sort of man the People's
Party wanted." Without further adieu to "the Genial Reuben," the
meeting adjourned to the courthouse, where a People's Party executive
committee was chosen, and a resolution passed "in hearty appreciation of
the good work done . . . in the Reform move[ment] by our friend and
Clay County boy J.C. Manning." In addition, the exuberant Clay
Countians asked "the different counties in Alabama to . . . elect
delegates to a People's Party State Convention." They proposed nothing
specific with regard to party organization or a date for the convention;
nevertheless, the call did not go unanswered. 36

By the end of April, at least eight other counties had taken less
dramatic steps toward People's Party organization. Seven of these
counties exhibited "a strong tendency toward independent political
action": Walker, Cleburne, Cullman, Etowah, Calhoun, Jefferson and
Shelby. Talladega County reported strong Populist sentiment, but less
positive action. 37 For counties so nearly contiguous, these nine
(counting Clay) exhibit such striking differences that it is difficult
to attribute their hospitality to Populism to material factors. Each
was predominantly white, but the percentages of Negro population ranged
from near zero in Cullman, to 48 in Talladega, with a fair distribution
of figures in between. 38 Each shared the Appalachian folk culture of
North Alabama, but the extent to which farmers in these counties were
threatened by a steadily rising rate of tenancy varied greatly, from 24 per cent of farms sharecropped in Walker, to 62 per cent in Calhoun and Talladega. In addition, though most of the nine counties were rural communities in a rural state, at least two of them (Jefferson and Calhoun) were affected in multitudinous ways by the presence of the New South meccas of Birmingham and Anniston. Overall, the counties of April Populism present a diverse picture, the details of which prove only that north-central Alabama was in the 1890's, as it is today, a microcosm of the up-country South.

Each of the early Populist counties, however, was marked by a simple but important peculiarity: the presence of local orators promoting the politics of the Subtreasury. In Clay, for example, the county-wide work done by school teacher H.C. Simmons was carried on at the beat level by obscure radical farmers such as J.T. Mountain or H.T. Grogan. Similarly, when congressional hopeful M.H. Lane "ripped both the old parties up the back" in Calhoun County, he could rely on local Populists like E.J. Stephens of Piedmont (who once said that he vastly preferred Yankee ingenuity to the stupidity of the "average Bourbon") to spread the message. One aspiring financial radical, A.P. Longshore of Shelby County, helped carry Populism to Cleburne that spring, and eventually managed Populist newspapers in three counties (Shelby, Cleburne, and Calhoun). Longshore was an experienced newspaperman, while C.J. Higgins, founder of People's Party clubs in Cullman County, was a farmer and previous Independent legislator. Another Cullman man, W.T. Powell, was chosen to be "the imported orator of the day" when Walker County farmers held an organizing convention in May. And so it went; the local leaders of
Populism were not as diverse as the communities they sprang from, but they present an interesting blend of fluency and simplicity, not free from ambition but united by conviction.

There had been scattered local orators and grassroots fervor for Populism in 1891, when the movement died from lack of encouragement and coordination within the Alabama Alliance. In 1892, however, most of the nine Populist counties were influenced by career organizers of the national People's Party. George Gaither, a national committeeman after the St. Louis convention, was active as the Assistant Lecturer of the Alliance in the seventh congressional district, which included Cullman, Etowah, Calhoun, Cleburne, Talladega, and Shelby counties. Joseph Manning, a representative of the most formidable Populist organization in the deep South, was intimate with reformers in Clay, Calhoun, and Jefferson counties. Interestingly, in light of the fact that Manning came to Alabama to "give the word" to waiting Populists, four of the nine counties which answered immediately (Cleburne, Calhoun, Talladega, and Jefferson) lay on the line of the Georgia Pacific Railroad which had carried Joseph from Atlanta to Birmingham. Although the evidence is circumstantial, it would seem that Populist organization in Alabama depended on the presence and energy of persuasive men. By the middle of April, moreover, Joseph Manning had proved this point with a virtuoso performance before the Jefferson County Alliance.

As Manning later recalled, "The response to my work was beginning to attract the attention of the press of the state." So it was not surprising that on April 14, 1892, the day when he was to address an important Alliance rally at Morris, Jefferson County, Joseph was
interviewed at Birmingham's Union Station by a reporter for one of the most progressive Democratic sheets, the *Birmingham News*. Feeling the fire which he was to impart to others that afternoon, the young man was anxious to talk. "The People's Party is on a great boom," he declared emphatically. "We have educated the farmers up to it, and we now propose to go to work on the laboring men." Asked about the future of the People's Party in light of Kolb's candidacy (which he now understood somewhat better), Manning—in the presence of his escort Jerry Fountain, an officer in the Jefferson County Alliance and a high-ranking "Kolbite" adviser—answered quickly: "We are going to put out a full ticket from constable up to governor. And we are going to win on it." Having thus flustered both his interviewer and his escort, Joseph boarded the train for Morris, where the threat posed by his People's Party "assumed a tangibility that is startling in its reality."48

At the picnic, in front of the massed Alliancemen, Manning "put the People's Party doctrine to them straight."49 He was eager to establish in the minds of his listeners a connection between Alliance solidarity and the birth of the new party. Above all, however, he had to break through the shell of cautious political orthodoxy which had isolated the agrarian order in Alabama. Punctuating his remarks with gestures and frequent dramatic pauses, Manning made his points with didactic excitement, while reporters scribbled down the highlights of his speech:

> The Third Party is the outcome of the Alliance. We have adopted the platform of the Alliance. We are with them in principle and work. The difference between us and the Alliance is that they constitute a secret non-political body, and we are a political body and believe in accomplishing our ends by legislation.50
Over and over again, Manning urged the Alliancemen to be true to
themselves. And to be sure that no one mistook his meaning, he readily
attacked "this practice of policy and dodging . . . perpetrated"
by the politicians in order to reconcile Alliance principles with
Democratic doctrine. Indeed, while reminding his audience that the
enactment of the St. Louis demands should be their paramount political
goal, Joseph launched a scarcely veiled frontal assault on Kolb and
his supporters for their willingness to exalt political "prejudices" at
the expense of the people. "This cry of party grandeur," he stated,
"has about brought financial ruin to this country." But, he
emphasized, the tools for victory lay within the grasp of every
Allianceman:

> What we need now is firmness and courage in the
> open support of what we deem to be right. I have
> that perfect confidence in the people of Alabama as
> makes me believe that they are now ready for the
> sternest tests.51

Carrying the Alliancemen "right along with him to the climaxes
that abound in his speeches," Joseph Manning wove a spell of urgency
around the Alliance meeting at Morris.52 After he left the stage,
the Jefferson County Alliance "went into the People's Party with a
whoop," and passed a resolution "recommending the individual voter
to vote for the party which advocated and embodied [our] principles,
which is the People's Party."53 Not surprisingly, one of the two
votes cast against this endorsement was that of Jerry Fountain, who
was left out in the cold when Manning subsequently "confer[ed] with
the prospective People's Party leaders."54 The Kolb camp would shortly
have its revenge, but for the moment no one contradicted a well-
informed Democrat who dropped by the Age-Herald office to say that
"This fellow Manning, whoever he is, has played the devil with Kolb's ducks."

Though he stayed in Birmingham for a few days after the Jefferson Alliance talk, Manning presently "announced his intention of visiting as many of the county Alliances as possible." This prospective tour, in addition to his display of oratory, won him a lasting nickname in the state press. In the future, whether grudgingly praised as a "young and smooth and efficient traveling organizer" or cursed for a radical "monkeying around Alabama trying to organize clubs in the interest of an 'ism'," he would be known as the Populist "Evangel." The name sprang into being in April, was associated with a story (soon retracted) that Manning had deserted a wife in Anniston, and stuck.

At the same time, the Democratic press began to honor this "Evangel" with the sort of treatment they had previously bestowed upon Kolb, or upon anyone who threatened the unity of "the party of the fathers." In this vein, the little Rockford Coosa County Advocate declared that Manning and the Populists were in league with the Republican Party, working for "the overthrow of white supremacy and the placing of black heels on white necks." A more formidable antagonist was the Memphis Commercial which, in an editorial circulated in Alabama, likened the Populists to the followers of Ben Butler and the Greenback Party in 1884, who were said to be "all the loud-mouthed labor agitators, rag-money cranks, and all the political tramps, vagabonds and stragglers in the country." In its readiness to play the trump card of anti-Republican sectionalism, moreover, the powerful Commercial was at one with its weekly colleagues:
Republican money will cause the lean flanks of these professional people-lovers to bulge with unwonted fat. They will . . . clatter their jaws for subtreasuries and fiat money, and all the while they will be gorging their pockets with the money of protected monopoly. 60

With the overconfidence of inexperience, Joseph Manning believed that he had time enough to educate Alabamians against these tested appeals of the Bourbons. But he still had a few things to learn about the Alliance leaders of his home state.

Before he could begin his tour of the county Alliances, Manning was called back "on a special mission to Atlanta." He returned, among other reasons, to brief Leonidas L. Polk on conditions in Alabama. Polk, that "splendid and magnetic personality" was in Georgia prior to a crucial conference of Southern Alliance presidents scheduled for Birmingham on May 3. Polk was undoubtedly interested in the truth about Samuel Adams, who was to be his host, and Manning was prepared to give a more realistic (but still optimistic) report of that troubled waverer. "If the Democratic Party cannot endorse the principles of the Alliance and the people are forced to come out in a fight for these principles," he said, then—"Mr. Adams is in heart a People's Party man." 61

While Manning was in Atlanta, however, Adams was pursuing a course detrimental to the People's Party. At a mass meeting in Bibb, his home county, the state president characterized the charge that he was a Populist as "a black lie," and angrily concluded that "all who called him a Third Party man were liars." Bibb County took no action toward Populist organization, nor did Dallas County in the Black Belt, where the Alliance put off the subject for a month under Adams'
urging. Then on April 20, Adams met in Birmingham with Reuben Kolb, Jerry Fountain, State Lecturer R.W. Beck, and others among the "most prominent Alliance leaders in the state." After conferring for several hours, these dignitaries leaked to the city press a report that they "had mutually pledged each other to resist the People's Party." In a more open interview, Adams was asked whether the "labor" conference of May 30 would turn out to be a Populist convention. He replied briefly: "There is no reason why it should."

As soon as Manning returned from his consultation with Polk (April 24), he stepped into an ideological tug-of-war for control of the Alliance. If the May 30 conference were to serve as an effective vehicle for the People's Party, then Manning and his Populist cohorts must strain "every nerve" in order to "prepare the Alliance people for the organization of that party." The "prominent leaders" mobilized by Adams, on the other hand, must merely keep the rank-and-file of the Alliance "in line for Captain Kolb." This they could accomplish through appeals to loyalty and tradition, or if those old methods failed, through a practical variety of self-fulfilling prophecy. Kolb, the conservative agrarians insisted, should "get before the people as a Democratic candidate with a claim to the nomination, and thereby hold thousands of Democrats that would run from a People's Party candidate."

Manning, for his part, went to work with the blessings of an entirely different set of "men whom the Alliance people trust." It was widely known that he had been to see Polk, and to enhance his prestige still further, Joseph gathered together a body of prospective Populists to meet with H.E. Taubeneck, national chairman of the People's Party. The latter had come to Birmingham in late April.
specifically "to block the game of suppressing his party in the interest of candidates who prefer to run as Democrats." With the backing of such national figures Manning hoped to counteract the influence of powerful "Kolbites" within the state Alliance.

From the point of view of the Alabama Populists, everything that Polk and the officers of the regional Alliance could do to establish a connection between Alliance solidarity and the People's Party was done in Birmingham on May 3-4. Though the meeting of 37 Southern officials was, according to one historian, a "delicate business" which failed to back the People's Party outright, the resolutions adopted were hailed in the state as "plainly in the interest of the Third Party." Led by the Montgomery Advertiser and its many satellites, the Bourbon press focused upon the most radical aspects of the conference, particularly upon its emphasis on "voting our demands at the ballot box." Such publicity was more encouraging for the Populists than the reality of the conference, and after Polk gave a ringing flat money interview to the Age-Herald and promised that Alabama could be represented at the Omaha convention, "Mr. Manning was reported to be quite jubilant" over the results of the meeting.

In the weeks to come, however, Manning was able to generate his own publicity. He had come back from Atlanta with money for a weekly newspaper. On May 12, he published the first number of the Birmingham Alabama Reformer "in response to the demands of the masses of the people in Alabama for a journal that would voice the[jir] will." Though it was issued only sporadically and failed to last out the year, this "red-hot" newspaper allowed Manning to spread the concepts and principles of Alliance-Populism among literally thousands of non-paying
customers across the state. In his first issue Joseph reprinted a Birmingham Age Herald editorial which stated flatly that the Democracy would never advocate "any system of paper currency not based on gold and silver." Then he asked scornfully: "Is there a single self-styled 'Democratic-Party-Alliance-man' left who will read this ... article and then continue to talk about securing our demands within the Democratic Party?" Manning likewise used the columns of the Alabama Reformer to advocate the Populist "solution of the color question," namely an integrated class union of producers against the Bourbons. "As a body," he quoted Tom Watson, Southern Negroes are laborers, not capitalists. "What is more natural than that they should feel a deep personal interest in this movement?" Thus, until his funds ran out, he preached fiat money and interracial politics—the twin terrors of the orthodox Democratic South.

In May and June, through the Alabama Reformer and through correspondence, the "Evangel" was able to launch a statewide organizational campaign. It was slow going—he was troubled with poor health and a sore throat—but soon, Populist sentiment spilled over into Coosa and Winston counties, and encouraging reports came in from Autauga County in central Alabama and Dale County in the south Alabama "Wiregrass." In the Black Belt, meanwhile, biracial possibilities were developing that would provide much of the controversy and much of the success associated with the People's Party.

When delegates from the Alliance, the Colored Alliance, the Citizens' Alliance, the Knights of Labor, and the Birmingham Trades Council came together on May 30, no one could tell how the meeting would proceed. The indications were, however, that Adams' "practical" appeals
had had their effect, and that even among "that class of Alllanclmen who set their 'demands' above the good doctrine of white supremacy," there was an inclination to "let the August election alone." In other words, even the committed Populists had come to realize the futility of opposing Kolb.

Samuel Adams was chief speaker at the conference, and his performance was an extraordinary and effective straddle. He was eloquent on behalf of the financial plank of the St. Louis platform, which called, he said, for a currency "issued direct to the people on the values created by their labor." But the Alliance president made no bones about his loyalty to the Democratic Party, and the contrast between his financial and political opinions was disturbing to some delegates. In fact, when Adams ended his fiat money remarks with a question designed to provoke cheers: "I wonder if anybody will say that [this financial system] is undemocratic?"--the hall rang instead with "loud laughter and cries of 'Give us the Third Party'."  

Despite this setback, Adams managed to turn his speech, and the emotions of his listeners toward that most pressing of current events: the upcoming Democratic convention, and the duty of Alllanclmen to stand firm. Forgetting about the St. Louis platform, Adams made a fine peroration aimed at keeping the delegates angry, and in the Democratic Party. "The machine can't ram wrong and injustice down the throats of the farmers of Alabama as a class," he said, "and compel them to submit." Calculating to a nicety the effect his words would produce, Adams then cut short his political remarks with the declaration that "No scoundrel can read us out of any party."
The president's strategy was successful, for when he had finished the conference voted to endorse the St. Louis platform "with but one opposing vote," and without mention of independent political action. The meeting was quickly adjourned, though not before one delegate group sounded a Populist note. "Various delegates" representing the Colored Alliances "bore witness," as the *Age Herald* put it, "to [their] desire . . . to join the white Alliances in this movement supporting the St. Louis platform." From the evidence, it seems that the man most responsible for stirring up the Black Belt for Populism was J.F. Washington, Colored Alliance man from Dallas County, who was present in Birmingham on May 30. Manning and other white Populist leaders from north Alabama had begun putting out feelers to such black organizers as Washington in May, a step which caused one moderate Democratic sheet, the Dadeville *Tallapoosa New Era*, to complain that "the Third Party organizers are proposing to take [in] all colors and previous political striped cattle."76

Coming just before adjournment, the statement of the black delegates prepared the ground for what followed. Before the gathering could break up, a Jefferson County Knight of Labor proposed a People's Party mass meeting, and most of the delegates stayed to watch as Joseph Manning took the chair. In his first major public address in over a month, Manning was "impassioned," and anxious to undo the damage done to the People's Party cause since he had left the state. Though his full speech was not printed even in the *Alabama Reformer*, the *Evangel* began by reviewing "the political and economic conditions now existing." Next, he countered Adams' loyalty with a scathing stump witticism: "He said the two old parties were links from
the same sausage made from the same dog." Fighting his way through hostile interruptions, Manning wound up by characterizing old-party politicians as "blood-sucking leeches on the body politic."

The next speaker was George Gaither, who spoke of the meeting as the culmination of all his work, and reminded the labor delegates that they "might as well go to hell for a load of ice, as to either of the old parties for relief." But "Apostles Manning and Gaither" were doomed to disappointment when the time came to ask for a show of hands from those willing to work for the new party. Only twenty-five men were willing to commit themselves, and though most of these were honored for their bravery by appointment to the first Populist state executive committee, these active participants knew that they were a mere corporal's guard. Newspapers over the state jeered at the Populist "sidewalk," with the Birmingham Daily News scoring the best hit:

It was a very small baby and contrary to the general run of things, the parents seem to have done all the yelling . . . It will be a long time before the Third Party baby arrives at the stature of a political Goliath in Alabama.

In the aftermath of the labor conference, some observers perceived that the People's Party might yet be a power in Alabama. Manning commented upon the Populistic bent of his "non-participating" audience in the Alabama Reformer, and Chappell Cory of the Age-Herald agreed with him "that the bulk of the delegates were in full sympathy with independent political action, or with the People's Party." Some of those who hung back expected "to vote for Kolb in August," said Cory, while others hoped "that something may yet happen . . . to hold the Democratic party together." After May 30, Cory understood that the
People's Party was like the toothache: "You cannot laugh it away," and Joseph Manning understood that racially, politically and culturally, the state Alliance was but half-ready to cope with a renunciation of the Solid South.

The magnitude of their difficulties struck home to Manning and Gaither just as the two men were issuing a call for an authentic People's Party convention, to be held June 23 in Birmingham. On the very day of the call (June 3), two members of the new Populist executive committee, W.J. Mason of Covington County and J.A. Smith of Butler County, publicly resigned their positions. Mason, like so many Alabama agrarians, was "an earnest and ardent supporter of Captain Kolb," and a man who had decided at last to stick by his old political loyalties "as long as there is one foot of ground [left] to stand on in the Democratic Party."

This blow, in combination with the exciting events planned by the "Kolbitas" for June, forced Populist leaders to make their peace with the Captain. Yet having once done so, they were free to continue their "campaign of education" and build a biracial, financially radical "Straightout" party. If their labors never came to a fruition in success, Alabama Populists at least enjoyed several months of hopeful, dangerous, revolutionary work.
Footnotes to Chapter II

1. Manning, *Five to Twenty-Five*, 35.

2. Butler Choctaw Alliance, May 2, 1894.


4. By the fall of 1891, local Populist clubs had been founded in Geneva, Marshall, and Calhoun counties. By April, 1892, similar clubs were organizing with the encouragement of Gaither in Etowah and Cullman, his home counties, and in Shelby County. See Map #2 for the geographical distribution of Populist activity before Manning came to Alabama. See the Ozark *Southern Star*, July 29, 1891, the Union Springs *Herald*, October 14, 1891, the Anniston *Weekly Times*, December 17, 1891, the Columbiana *Shelby Chronicle*, March 16, 1892, and the Birmingham *Age-Herald*, April 5, 1892. For Gaither's recollections of his earlier career, see the Columbiana *Shelby Chronicle*, June 1, 1892.

5. Gaither's ineptitude emerges from the whole of his statements to the press, of which one example must suffice. At a time when he was state chairman of the People's Party, Gaither admitted in the Montgomery *Alliance Herald*, November 11, 1893, that would-be Populist organizers had sent him "too many questions for me to attempt to answer." In response to queries about the then-upcoming Populist state convention, he wrote: "If you want to be in the procession, just organize... and I will see that you know the time and place." For information on the Brundidge convention of 1891, see below, and Rogers, *One-Galled Rebellion*, 191-192.

6. Rogers, *One-Galled Rebellion*, 113-120.


10. Ibid., quoting the Montgomery *Advertiser*, August 16, 1890.

11. R.F. Kolb to L.L. Polk, June 6, 1889, in the Leonidas L. Polk Papers, Southern Historical Collection, Chapel Hill.

12. Ibid.
13. These remarks are quoted in the Eufaula *Times and News*, April 14, 1892.


15. Bolling Hall, speech of resignation from the Farmer's Alliance, n.d., 1891 folder, in the Bolling Hall Papers, ADAH.

16. Kolb is quoted in Rogers, *One-Gallused Rebellion*, 191. For information on the lists which Kolb compiled for Wheeler, see R.F. Kolb to Joseph Wheeler, December 6, 1889, July 31, August 31, September 15, 19, 1890, in the Wheeler Papers. The "Force Bill," or Lodge Federal Elections Bill, was a measure designed to limit election fraud and racial intimidation through federal supervision of polling places. Passed by the House of Representatives in July of 1890, the Lodge Bill was killed in the Senate in January of 1891. In 1890 and thereafter, federal intervention became a major Southern Democratic scare issue. See Stanley P. Hirshon, *Farewell to the Bloody Shirt: Northern Republicans and the Southern Negro, 1877-1893* (Gloucester, Massachusetts: Peter Smith and Company, 1968), 200-235, and Welch, *George Frisbie Hoar*, 147-149.

17. John W. HartIn to J.W. DuBose, August 19, 1891, in the John Witherspoon DuBose Papers, ADAH. Similarly in central Alabama one Democratic politician wrote to another: "We of the [county] Executive Committee must be patient and vigilant, and above all things conservative in dealing with the Alliance." H.H. Hall to J.T. Plott, December 27, 1891, in the Bolling Hall Papers.

18. Rogers, *One-Gallused Rebellion*, 176-182, 183. The quotation is taken from the Union Springs Herald, June 4, 1890.


20. Ibid., 201. For the quoted passages, see T.W. Spain to T.G. Jones, February 8, 1892, and Dr. Robert Leslie to Captain Harry Jones, n.d., 1892 folder, in the Thomas Goode Jones Papers, ADAH. Kolb was accused of every crime from petty thievery to betrayal of the Democracy, "the party of the fathers." A concerned and honorable Bourbon, Robert McKee, secretary to governors in the 1880's warned Jones that such persecution only helped the ex-Commissioner: "Mr. Kolb has been made an important personage in spite [of] himself. He is indebted to his enemies for his prominence and power . . . It is a fact that those of the people not opposed to him do not believe anything alleged against him, and would not, though an angel came down to affirm all." See Robert McKee to T.G. Jones, January 8, 1892, in the Robert McKee Papers, ADAH.
21. Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 208-209, and the Birmingham Age-Herald, April 16, 1892. A good analysis of the effect of the committee's ruling can be found in Robert McKee to Democratic State Chairman Henry Clay Tompkins, April 10, 1892, in the McKee Papers. For a manuscript report of Kolb's decision to bolt, see I.S. Simpson to T.G. Jones, April 22, 1892, in the Jones Papers.

22. Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 209 and Robert McKee to W.D. McAuley, April 20, 1892, in the McKee Papers.

23. Reese was a "progressive" mayor of Montgomery in the late 1880's. For information on his terms in office, see the Montgomery Advertiser, April 7, 1887. For information on the Citizens' Alliance, see Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 195; see also W.S. Reese to Joseph Wheeler, January 6, 1891, and January 22, 1894, in the Wheeler Papers.


25. Centreville People's Reflector, September 22, 1892. Published in Adams' home county of Bibb, this first issue of the People's Reflector contained his declaration of "unaltering allegiance and fealty to the principles of Democracy ... as taught by Andrew Jackson." Ibid., October 13, 1892, contains Adams' racist "expose" of alleged friendship between Frederick Douglass and Grover Cleveland.


27. Montgomery Alliance Herald, July 16, 1891.


29. Birmingham Age-Herald, April 6, 1892, and the Atlanta People's Party Paper, April 7, 1892.

30. Birmingham Age-Herald, April 6, 18, 1892. Despite Adams' oscillations, many Democratic sheets considered him to be a Populist. The Rockford Coosa County Advocate, April 21, 1892, noted: "It is confidently expected that [Adams'] labor conference to be held in Birmingham will declare straight out for the Third Party." Meanwhile the more prestigious Tuscaloosa Gazette (quoted in the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, April 28, 1892) asserted that Adams and other Alliance radicals were "striking out boldly to disrupt the party ... through this Third Party movement." As late as June 30, the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era reprinted an article from the Washington, D.C., National Watchman, advising Populists to throw off the "demagogue" Kolb and work with "an earnest, honest reformer like President Adams or some other good man."
31. Birmingham Age-Herald, April 6, 1892.


33. Birmingham Age-Herald, April 6, 1892.

34. Birmingham Age-Herald, April 18, 1892. Cory, a Machiavellian Silver Democrat and future Progressive, covered the upheavals of 1892 more intelligently than the editors of Alabama's other important dailies, the Montgomery Advertiser and the Mobile Register, who equated Populism with Kolbism and Republicanism.


36. Ashland Clay County Advance, April 8, 15, 29, 1892, Eufaula Times and News, April 14, 1892, and Prattsville Progress, April 15, 1892.

37. For information concerning the formation of Populist clubs and prospective county conventions in all eight counties cited, see the Birmingham Age-Herald, April 5, 9, 13, 16, 17, 1892; for information on Populism in Calhoun, Cleburne, Etowah and Talladega counties, see the Anniston Weekly Times, March 7, 24, April 7, 14, 1892, and for Shelby County, see the Columbiana Shelby Chronicle, March 16, May 4, June 8, 1892. For the geographical distribution of "April" Populism, see attached Map #4.

38. Sheldon Hackney, Populism to Progressivism in Alabama (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), 336. Hackney's figures, taken from the census of 1900, list the following percentages of blacks in the counties under consideration: Cullman, 0; Cleburne, 6; Clay, 11; Etowah, 16; Calhoun, 29; Shelby, 31; Jefferson, 43; Talladega, 48.

39. The Eleventh Census, 1890, III. Statistics of Agriculture, 34, provides figures which reveal the following percentages of farms sharecropped: Walker, 24; Cullman, 24; Jefferson, 34; Clay 37; Cleburne, 39; Shelby, 43; Calhoun, 62; Talladega, 62.

40. Ashland Clay County Advance, April 15, 1892. Another important Clay County organizer was M.W. Whatley, a farmer and relative of W.R. Whatley; M.W. Whatley subsequently carried the Populist message into neighboring Coosa County, went to the Omaha convention in 1892, and ran for congress. See the Rockford Coosa County Advocate, October 6, 1892.
41. Anniston Weekly Times, April 14, 1892, and Ashland People's Party Advocate, May 18, 1894. Stephens was a member of a landowning family of Piedmont, a north-Calhoun center of Populist sentiment.

42. Columbiana Shelby Chronicle, May 4, 1892, and Oxford Voice, May 7, 1892. For Longshore's newspaper activity see Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 258. Newspapers played a leading role in the abortive People's Party work of 1891 in Alabama; the Geneva Record, edited by Daniel Swanner and the Greenville Living Truth, edited by the redoubtable one-legged radical J.M. Whitehead, were both founded in 1891. Other Populist papers were founded in early 1892. In Etowah County, Miss Nora Gaither edited the Walnut Grove Progressive People, while Talladega countians were exposed to a brief run of the Talladega Southern Alliance, edited by Philander Morgan, Populist brother of Senator John Tyler Morgan. The best source of information on reform journalism in Alabama is Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 249-271.

43. Birmingham Age-Herald, April 23, 1892, and Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, May 19, 1892.

44. Birmingham Age-Herald, April 5, 1892.

45. A map of Alabama railroads can be found in Going, Bourbon Democracy, 128.

46. Populist activity did not depend on a local history of political insurrection. According to the appendix on state elections in Going, Bourbon Democracy, 213-231, six of the nine counties (Clay, Cullman, Etowah, Jefferson, Shelby, Walker) elected at least one non-Democratic legislator during the years 1874-1888. Yet none of the April counties voted consistently for Independent or Greenback candidates, as did several counties in northwest Alabama, nor did the local Democratic rings relinquish power for long periods of time. Thus while experienced politicians such as H.C. Simmons helped Populism to spread more rapidly in the spring of 1892, they did so by politicizing the program of the thoroughly organized Farmer's Alliance. In Jefferson County, labor organizer Jerry Dennis, editor of the Birmingham Labor Advocate from 1889-1894, gave a similar boost to the People's Party through the Birmingham Trades Council. See the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, May 14, 1896, for a biography of Dennis a colorful native of Tallapoosa County.

47. Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 34.

48. Birmingham News, quoted in the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, April 28, 1892, and the Rockford Coosa County Advocate, April 21, 1892.

49. Birmingham Age-Herald, April 15, 1892; Ibid., April 16, 1892, put the number of Alliance men in Jefferson County at 1500.

Birmingham Age-Herald, April 16, 1892.

Ibid. The Age-Herald, also said of Manning: "Those who have heard him say that he is irrepressible in his line. His language is clear-cut and his attempts are as logical as it is possible for Third Party talk to be.

Rockford Coosa County Advocate, April 21, 1892.

Birmingham Age-Herald, April 15, 16, 1892.

Ibid., April 18, 1892.

Rockford Coosa County Advocate, April 21, 1892.

Manning was frequently called "the Clay County Evangel." See the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, April 14, 28, 1892, and the Greenville Advocate, May 4, 1892.

Anniston Weekly Times, April 14, 28, 1892.

Rockford Coosa County Advocate, April 21, 1892.

Memphis Commercial, quoted in the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, April 28, 1892.

Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 34 and Birmingham Age-Herald, April 18, 1892. Manning also traveled to Atlanta in search of money with which to found a weekly newspaper. See below.

Birmingham Age-Herald, April 19, 23, 29, May 2, 1892.

Ibid., April 21, 1892, and the Birmingham News, quoted in the Eufaula Times and News, April 28, 1892.

Birmingham Age-Herald, April 16, 18, 1892.

Ibid., April 18, 28. The names of the prospective leaders are not given. Basically, Taubeneck was in Birmingham to consult with the Southern Alliance presidents.

Goodwyn, Democratic Promise, 269. For comments of the Democratic Press, see the Montgomery Advertiser, May 4, 5, 6, 1892 (from which the quoted passage is taken), the Rockford Coosa County Advocate May 12, 1892, and the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, May 12, 1892. The latter quoted the Memphis Commercial concerning the "Address" approved by Alliance officials: "In spite of all the swash of words which surround it, it is practically a declaration for the Third Party."
67. Birmingham Age-Herald, May 3, 1892. For a discussion of Polk’s strategy before and during the conference, see Goodwyn, Democratic Promise, 268-270.

68. Birmingham Alabama Reformer, May 12, 1892, and the Birmingham Age-Herald, May 3, 5, 12, 1892. According to the Age-Herald Manning was able to distribute, for a brief period, 5000 issues at a time, with 400 subscribers in a single (unnamed) county. Other comment upon the Alabama Reformer can be found in the Montgomery Advertiser, May 6, 1892, the Talladega News Reporter, May 7, 1892, and the Oxford Voice, June 4, 1892. Only three copies of the Alabama Reformer are known to exist today: May 12, 26, June 2, 1892.

69. Birmingham Alabama Reformer, May 12, 26, 1892.

70. Ibid., June 2, 1892, and the Birmingham Age-Herald, April 28, 1892. This is the first hint of chronic poor health in Manning’s career; he suffered similar breakdowns in 1894-1895, 1896-1897, and 1904. Though the evidence is not clear, probably Manning's health steadily declined from the early 1890's until the mid-1920's, when he became a bed-ridden cancer patient. For the spread of Populism to Winston and Coosa counties, see the Birmingham Age Herald, May 17, 25, 1892, and the Rockford Coosa County Advocate, June 10, 1892. In Conecuh and Autauga counties, agrarians held separate "Alliance conventions" in support of Kolb, without committing themselves to either the People's Party or the prospective Jeffersonian Democracy. See the Prattville Progress, May 20, 1892.

71. Birmingham Age-Herald, May 11, 29, 1892, and Montgomery Advertiser, May 31, 1892. Nearly 100 delegates, representing 45 of Alabama’s 66 counties, were present at the conference.

72. Birmingham Age-Herald, May 31, 1892.

73. Birmingham Age-Herald, May 31, 1892, and Ozark Banner, June 2, 1892.

74. Montgomery Advertiser, May 31, 1892, Monroeville Monroe Journal, June 2, 1892, and Prattville Progress, June 3, 1892.

75. Birmingham Age-Herald, May 31, 1892. For reports of Washington’s further Populist activity in the Black Belt, see ibid., September 11, 1892, and the Montgomery Advertiser, September 11, 1892.

76. Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, May 19, 1892. The New Era was considered moderate because of its journalistic alliance with the Age-Herald, and because it favored Kolb up until the time of his "bolt."

77. Birmingham Age-Herald, May 31, 1892, and Union Springs Herald, June 1, 1892.
74. Columbiana Shelby Chronicle, June 1, 1892, and Birmingham Alabama Reformer, quoted in the Atlanta People's Party Paper, June 17, 1892.

79. Birmingham Alabama Reformer, quoted in the Atlanta People's Party Paper, June 17, 1892. One of the hecklers was one Norton of Mobile, whom Manning subsequently called a "cracked-crank, fizzling fizzle from fizzleville." See the Birmingham Age-Herald, June 2, 1892.

80. Columbiana Shelby Chronicle, June 1, 1892, and Ozark Banner, June 2, 1892.

81. Monroeville Monroe Journal, June 2, 1892. The members of the executive committee were listed in the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, June 9, 1892. In alphabetical order, by counties, they were: C.C. Lee, Barbour; R.R. Hicks, Bibb; John A. Smith, Butler; W.J. Mason and J.F. Terry, Covington; M.W. Whatley, Clay; W.H. Wood, W.T. Powell, Cullman; W.S. Bell, Dale; J.H. McLain and G.R. Mason, Dallas; W.A. Downs, Elmore; C.H. Bean, Jefferson; J.J. Steele, Lauderdale; J.B. Townsend, Montgomery; David Cook, Morgan; John W. Pitts and A.P. Longshore, Shelby; Philander Morgan, Talladega; L.P. Burke, Tuscaloosa; Sam Snoddy, Walker. In all probability these men represent the fruits of Manning's journalistic work in May. For the geographical distribution of Populist activity as of June 1, 1892, see attached Map #5.

82. Birmingham Daily News, May 31, 1892. For other estimates of the mass meeting as a "failure," see the Prattsville Progress, June 3, 1892, and the Ashland Clay County Advance, June 3, 1892; in the latter, Manning's brother M.N. Manning tactfully omitted any mention of the part Joseph played.

83. Birmingham Alabama Reformer, quoted in the Atlanta People's Party Paper, June 17, 1892, and Birmingham Age-Herald, May 31, 1892.

84. Birmingham Age-Herald, May 31, June 10, 1892.

85. Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, June 9, 1892.

86. Columbiana Shelby Chronicle, June 1, 1892, and Birmingham Age-Herald, June 3, 1892.
On June 8, 1892, when the renomination of Thomas Jones became a foregone conclusion, Reuben Kolb and his supporters bolted the Democratic convention in Montgomery. From that moment these "Jeffersonian Democrats" operated on the assumption that they were authentic Democrats representing an overwhelming majority of the plain people, and as such they took steps to assert their political integrity. Within a few days, the Jeffersonians had chosen a state executive committee and written a platform. While People's Party leaders struggled to organize their first state convention, Jeffersonian delegates were in Chicago clamoring to be recognized at the Democratic National Convention. So began the conservative revolt called by one historian "the most salient fact of Alabama political life in 1892."1

In reality, Kolb knew that he had precipitated a painful test of loyalties in which thousands of his former supporters would desert him. He must therefore look in part—as had every Independent candidate before him—to "those who have always stood ready to destroy the Democratic Party."2 Chief among that number was Robert A. Moseley of Birmingham, boss of the dominant "Lily White" wing of the state GOP. More than willing to become a temporary Kolbite if he could defeat the organized Democrats in a presidential election year, Moseley saw to it that the Republicans made no gubernatorial nomination in 1892, and traveled the cities of Alabama in company with such agrarians as
Samuel Adams.\textsuperscript{3} Moseley, in addition, had the ear of the wealthy Republican national committee and would enjoy the backing and patronage of any Republican administration. Kolb, on the other hand, was perpetually embarrassed for campaign money and justifiably apprehensive of being "counted out" in the Black Belt. For these reasons, and despite the discomfort and opprobrium he experienced as northern journals began to applaud his candidacy as "a sign of the end of Southern solidarity [sic]," the ex-Commissioner saw his involvement with the Republican Party grow.\textsuperscript{4}

The most controversial of Kolb's supporters, however, were black. It was ironic that "the Genial Reuben," an avowed white supremacist, should be forced into social innovations in order to break the domination of the Black Belt machine and doubly ironic, in light of the fact that the Democratic convention had rejected a Kolbite proposal to settle the nomination through a white primary.\textsuperscript{5} Notwithstanding such interior contradictions, a need for black votes and support forced the Jeffersonian platform-makers to pledge "the protection of the colored race in its legal rights . . . so that through the means of kindness, fair treatment and just regard for them, a better understanding and more satisfactory condition may exist between the races."\textsuperscript{6} During the campaign Kolb and his lieutenants employed black organizers, traveled with black speakers, and spoke to black audiences, with heartening results. There can be little doubt that political circumstances in many Black Belt counties were similar to those in Wilcox County, where, though the black voters were reported to be "almost a unit for Kolb," a heavy majority of black votes were ultimately recorded by the county machine for Thomas Jones.\textsuperscript{7}
Kolb's search for support outside the Farmer's Alliance, and particularly for black support, is relevant to the story of Joseph Manning and the People's Party. First, their "nigger rights" plank committed the Jeffersonians to a Populistic biracialism, a fact utilized by the Democratic press as the foundation of its appeal to Southern loyalties. The Birmingham News called the Jeffersonian racial plank "a slap in the face of every white Democrat in the state," while the Butler Choctaw Advocate struck to the heart of the matter by asking its readers to consider: "Who can look upon the fair and lovely women of this land, and endorse this principle?" The proven effectiveness of such irresponsible appeals, together with the alacrity with which loyal Democrats prepared, as Chappel Cory put it, "to follow [Jones]... to victory achieved by blood if need be," shook a number of Kolbites out of their states' rights complacency. These awakened Jeffersonians learned to cooperate with black and white Republicans and Populists, and in the process acquired a broader view of civil liberties. As a determined Blount County "Jeff" wrote that June:

I don't know that I understand the Force Bill, but if it is to give a man a fair chance to vote, I think it is right, and I wish to God that Uncle Sam could put bayonets around the ballot boxes in the Black Belt on the first Monday in August so that the negro could get a fair count.

In the end, the liberalism of the Jeffersonian Democrats fell short of genuine biracialism. Yet during the summer of 1892 many of the old barriers seemed to be breaking down, and Alabama farmers were in the mood to listen to straightout Populism as never before.

After the mass meeting of May 30, Populist speakers fanned out
across Alabama. Joseph Manning led the way, speaking before 600 farmers at Calera in Shelby County on June 7. At the same time, local reformers launched a "People's Ticket" in Lee County, and W. M. McNutt, who "mixed religion with politics," began organizing Populist clubs in Dekalb County. Despite these initiatives, it was apparent well before the Populist state convention of June 23 that Kolb's popularity threatened to divert the young People's Party. Kolblte executive committees staged well-attended rallies in such Populist strongholds as Talladega and Calhoun counties. Worse, local Jeffersonian "bosss" were able to "convert a People's Party gathering into a Kolb meeting" in Fayette County. But the most serious blow fell when the Clay County Populists, with Manning, Simmons, and Whatley looking on, endorsed Kolb for governor after perfecting their county organization. After that, Manning and other radical evangelists accepted the importance and appeal of Kolb's candidacy and worked, with considerable realism, to salvage as much independence and strength as possible for the People's Party. Under the circumstances, they were able to accomplish a great deal.

On June 23, forty-eight Populists representing about thirty counties filed into Erswell's Hall in downtown Birmingham. They were charged with the tasks of writing a platform, choosing delegates to the Omaha convention and--most important--deciding the nature of future relations between the Jeffersonian Democrats and the People's Party. Opinion on the last point was divided, but most of the delegates were probably as flexible (and unenthusiastic) as an unidentified leader interviewed by
the Age-Herald: "Some of our men talk about naming a good man for governor and in that way beating both Kolb and Jones," he said. "But I don't know how that will be." The very call which had summoned these men, moreover, reflected the importance of the one issue destined to bring Populists, Jeffersonians, and Republicans together: fear of being "bulldozed" in the Black Belt. Written by Manning, that document committed the delegates in Ersewell Hall to considering the means of preserving civil liberty, "equal rights to all, ... [and] a perpetuity of our governmental institutions" in Alabama.

The convention was chaired by A.P. Longshore; Manning and Gaither made a point of letting the convention reach its own decisions without a hint of dictation from on high. After a number of introductory speeches, a committee of five retired to draw up a platform and make suggestions concerning the upcoming state election. The serious political calculation and debate upon these topics, therefore, was conducted beyond the hearing of Democratic reporters, and the final actions of the convention made to seem confident and disinterested. The platform as reported simply endorsed the St. Louis demands. In addition, the committee recommended that the People's Party "make no nominations for state officers in this campaign." The convention agreed to both propositions, but instead of endorsing Kolb directly, asked the voters to choose between "the perpetuation of bossism and machine rule, and a rule of the people." Far from capitulating to the Jeffersonians, the delegates resolved, in fact, to "hold their organization throughout the state intact, and push ... forward until success shall crown our efforts."
Serious controversy arose only when a committee chaired by Manning brought back nominations for the delegation to Omaha. After a number of white men had been accredited, a project was "gotten afoot" by a group of (unnamed) delegates to include a black man in the Alabama contingent "to represent his race." Some of the Populists protested passionately against this proposal. Their spokesman was Dr. F.L. Fielder of Birmingham, a Knight of Labor who declared that while "he loved the negro in a manner," he had "always been a Southerner and proposed to die one." After this outburst of traditional racism, Fielder proceeded in a more rational vein. Every man in Erswell's Hall understood him when he argued that placing a black man in such a prominent position would open the party to heightened newspaper attacks and earn for all Populists the stigma of being "negro lovers." These were weighty words in the South of 1892, but interestingly enough, agrarian brotherhood proved stronger than white supremacy.

The doctor and his supporters were overcome by the efforts of two strangely-matched speakers from different corners of the hill country. The first man to rise on behalf of sending a Negro to Omaha was John Dale, a seventy-two year old semi-literate from DeKalb County. This venerable white radical was imbued with the class-oriented culture of Populism, and he "wanted the negro to be on his side." He was "strongly in favor of them as political allies," reminding the convention of "the need of their votes to down the bosses." Dale was followed by H.C. Simmons of Clay County, who thundered that he "could trust a negro, but could not trust a machine." The eloquent schoolteacher carried the day by adding his own diverse ideas to the racial arguments of Tom Watson and the Georgia straightouts:
After Simmons finished speaking the convention agreed to send one T.M. Johnson, a black man, to Omaha. If the decision to give such a post of honor to a Negro was blatant tokenism, it was also an act which set a precedent for four years of biracial campaigning.

No one better understood the political dangers to which the Populists were exposing themselves than J.M. Whitehead of Greenville, and in a letter to Governor Jones written shortly after the June 23 convention, the uncompromising editor of the Living Truth revealed much of what was passing through the minds of agrarian radicals in the South. In requesting the governor to ensure that elections in Alabama would be carried off honestly, Whitehead reviewed the history of Black Belt fraud, the practice of which had been continued, he noted, because of "a real or supposed necessity for the maintenance of 'white supremacy.'" Whitehead admitted the power of prejudice, which "has left its imprint on the moral character of our people," but he hoped that the governor would join with the agrarian forces "to avert, if we can, the possible evil consequences to flow from it" in 1892. Meanwhile most Populists, Whitehead included, braced for "a harsh and trying campaign, in which one class of men are [to be] arrayed against another." What People's Party men really expected of their enemies was best expressed, perhaps, by the impartially reformist Ozark Banner:

The Southern fire-and-brimstone campaign will be composed of two principal ingredients, namely the Force Bill and Negro Supremacy.
Before the Democratic counter-attack broke with full force, Manning and the rest of the thirty-five-man Alabama delegation enjoyed an encouraging respite at the Omaha convention. In later years Joseph remembered Omaha as the scene of a remarkable display of brotherhood, where tumultuous crowds from North and South united in a movement "distinctly representative of the rank and file of the people of America." The very scale of the proceedings was majestic—there were nearly 1400 delegates—and in the millennial atmosphere of the people's crusade, even the reading of a telegram from the ten senators and representatives who had subscribed to the new party seemed to the young Alabamian to herald the dawn of change. Manning mingled with the crowds, spoke extemporaneously, and enjoyed seeing the "color print editions" bill him as the "Boy Orator of Alabama." Most important of all, Omaha gave him a sense of renewed intimacy and place among a truly national corps of reformers, and the conviction that their common aims could be realized.

During the course of the convention Joseph shared the platform with Ignatius Donnelly, the "Sage of Mininger," and Terence Powderly, Master Workman of the Knights of Labor. It was typical of his youthful naiveté and of the euphoria pervading the convention that Manning remembered these two men, both representatives of shrinking constituencies, as powerful leaders ready to unite the farmers of the Northwest and the workingmen of the cities with the Alliancemen of the South. Yet like the thousands who fell under the spell of Donnelly's eloquence, Manning wholly believed (in the words of the Omaha platform) that "the interests of rural and civic labor are the same," and that this
"union of the labor forces of the United States . . . shall be permanent and perpetual." Whatever the demands of the Omaha platform might mean to the famous men who had never undergone the transforming experience of Southern Populism, to Joseph Manning they represented a crucial challenge "to crystalize in the public mind a platform of demands long under discussion by [the] founders of the Alliance." For all of its great expectations, however, the Populist national convention was darkened by the passing of L.L. Polk, the talented intersectional conciliator, who had combined persuasive radicalism with a sensitive "understanding of [the proper] approach to Southern sentiment." Polk had been the leading presidential candidate of the People's Party, but with his death and the staunch refusal of Judge Walter Q. Gresham of Illinois to run as a Populist, the nomination fell as a "foregone conclusion" upon a third major contender, James B. Weaver of Iowa. An ex-Union general with a dubious record as a commander of occupation forces, Weaver was likewise a notorious and compulsive third-party politician. He was not the man that the Southerners at Omaha would have picked. Nevertheless, when the roll call of states began, Joseph Manning presented Weaver to the convention with a brief address, and joined in the celebrations which followed that candidate's July 4 victory. Before the reformers went their separate ways, Manning hastened to secure promises to speak in Alabama from Weaver and from James Field, the ex-Confederate general from Virginia who was chosen to balance the ticket. Then it was time for him to board a special train carrying Populist delegates to St. Louis and points south, and make his way back to Alabama, where he would face
a tremendous ideological challenge and no little personal danger.  

After the Omaha convention Alabama Populists pledged, in the words of one club, "their honor, their property and their lives to the support and election of the people's ticket." Joseph Manning and his compatriots were determined, he said, to drag "the old leaders out of the wire of . . . their political harangues about the Civil War and the Negro Question." In order to change the political orientation of a whole people, the handful of Populists returning from Nebraska must spread the sense of infinite political and social possibility which was the essence of Omaha. And as Manning remembered that hot political summer, the response was amazing; black and white, men and women, "hundreds of country orators with guts and gizzard" enlisted in the People's Party. Yet as Manning understood, the major concentrations of Populist strength remained in the white counties of North Alabama and the Wiregrass, and most organizers (Joseph included) couched their arguments in terms of the landowning yeoman culture with which they identified. The long-term significance of the agrarian movement may well lie in the fact that so many persons raised in the racist atmosphere of the late nineteenth-century South chose to step beyond the "proper" lines of race and gender. But the outlines of Alabama Populism took shape in the hills.

There was, Manning wrote, "an expression on the faces of the whites in the hill counties that was a yearning." The price of cotton, that jealous staple upon which even those small farmers depended, was sinking steadily toward its all-time low of 4.5 cents. Families that had
been known as "good-livers" were now "scant in clothing and short in
food, . . . glad to have bread and gravy, going for days without
meat."34 Worse, many of the hill folk were in danger of falling into
a state of agricultural and political apathy promoted by the merchant
oligarchies. The crop lien system was a trap of total dependence,
but the root of the farmer's dilemma was summed up by a Populist orator
who asked his audience: "How many of you can get supplies without
planting cotton?"35 Into this situation the People's Party organizers
came as a rejuvenating force. To the poverty-stricken white tenants
and landowners, the Populist missionaries were first of all friends and
"well-wishers," brothers who "sorrowed because of their hardships and
neglect." But the agrarian radicals of the 1890's, as Manning knew,
were also the lineal descendants of the Alliance lecturers, and as
such brought "to these people a vision of better things, . . .
hope to the almost hopeless." Like the Alliance lecturers, moreover,
Manning and company were not content to engage the attention of the
poor, but wanted them to act, to regain their personal dignity and
change their lives. "My object, my ambition," wrote Joseph,
was to get issues discussed and to awaken in the
consciousness of the suppressed and repressed white
masses of the people the importance of self-
assertion in politics. I wanted to . . . cause a
new deal.36

This was the primary goal of the Populist organizers during the
first campaigns of education in Alabama: to stimulate an active,
striving resentment of the Bourbon cycle of control and conformity.
The irrefutable tool of the agrarian orator was the obvious connectedness
and manipulation of rural institutions. At the crossroads and meeting
houses of "Peckerwood," the complexities of national reform politics
and Greenback economics were laid aside, and freedom was defined as the right to earn a sufficiency among a community of independent men. As Joseph Manning summarized his arguments in the campaign of 1892, the principles of Populism seem homely and immediate:

I appealed for education for their children, against extortionate charges for their home supplies under the crop mortgage system, and for political policies that would ensure equal rights to all. I preached the gospel of human brotherhood until I became known as the 'Clay County Evangel.'

Human dignity and solidarity were the watchwords of the People's Party, but in order for the nascent agrarian culture to embrace society, an entire system would have to be toppled. "The whole trouble with us," J.M. Whitehead told the Populists of southeastern Alabama, "has been that we worked, an' hired another fellow to do our thinkin'."

The Democratic "thinkers" were powerful and confident—yet when the spirit of Populism began to spread that summer, reformers such as Manning and Whitehead prepared their followers "to face scorn and derision rather than acquiesce in a . . . political leadership that had brought humanity to an abyss of suffering."39

Unfortunately, converts to Populism had to face more than angry appeals to return to the paths of loyalty to the South. The most effective means of persuasion at the disposal of the bosses were economic. As Manning explained, "Credit was denied, farm supplies withheld, and mortgages were foreclosed . . . against supporters of the People's Party."40 Reform-minded lawyers, schoolteachers, and doctors were often boycotted, especially in the largely Democratic towns and cities of Alabama.41 The attempt to deny a livelihood to political non-conformists extended to the churches, where Populist ministers, greatly outnumbered in any case by conservative divines, were dismissed.
by politically divided congregations. One such minister was John Dale of Dekalb County, a man whose conduct exemplified the mountaineer ruggedness of conviction with which many agrarians confronted the combined social and economic ostracism of the traditional society. Dale was an "exhorter" in the Baptist church; he related to Joseph Manning what followed after he was threatened by Democratic Baptists in his locale:

'Yes,' he said, 'they told me I shouldn't preach but when Sunday came I just went right on to my church and I just walked right on up and into the pulpit, and I just opened my Bible and took a text which showed them I'd be damned if I didn't preach.'

Another weapon in the oligarchies' arsenal of persuasion was what Manning called "political terrorism." With friendly state and local governments behind them, there was little to prevent Bourbon partisans from assaulting the nefarious "Pops, Jeffs, and Rads." Less than a month after the Omaha convention, Manning was mobbed in his old college town of Florence, under circumstances which implicated some of "the so-called best people of the South." Manning barely escaped with his life, but his case was hardly unique; Populist speakers were regularly "egged" and intimidated with more or less violence all over Alabama. Violent incidents proliferated wherever "the mental attitude essential to the . . . political supremacy of the slave-owning Democratic Party" was challenged. Families were divided—two brothers belonging to a well-known Calhoun County family attacked each other murderously on the streets of Anniston—and citizens frequently stabbed, shot or lynched each other at public gatherings.

It would be fair to conclude that the irresponsibility and passion were equal on both sides, except for the fact that most Democratic
partisans believed devoutly, after years of exposure to Bourbon editors and orators, that white insurgents were traitors to the master race. As allies of the malign and feared Negro, Manning and his cohorts were vulnerable to an emotional hatred which he—interpreting events with the patronizing racial outlook of a North Alabamian—believed "was worked up more to politically disarm and overcome the opposition whites than it was to bully and cower already helpless Negroes." Yet in the long run, neither violence nor racist propaganda could prevent agrarians from striving for a genuinely interracial organization. Whatever their prejudices, Populist leaders understood that the struggle for political independence must spread far beyond the yeoman bastions of the hills.

White political mythology had branded Negroes as the helpless pawns of the Black Belt Democrats, but some of the most important new Populists were black. Black agrarians, for their part, viewed the growth of a biracial reform movement as an opportunity for racial advancement. Amid the uncertainties of the first campaign in over a decade in which a Democratic victory was in question, black men were able to demand and assert authority as seldom before. Thus, though white Populists made extensive tours of the Black Belt, black reformers, whether drawn from the Colored Alliance or the Republican Party, generally supported Reuben Kolb and the People's Party without distinction. L.W. McManaway, a black Populist, traveled with Kolb in Henry County and was rotten-egged with him there, and the nominally straightout Populist J.F. Washington participated in Jeffersonian caucuses while outraged Democratic reporters fumed out-of-doors.
On the other hand, some Negro spokesmen experienced dramatic conversions to Midroad reform, as when Eli Upshaw "pledged his political faith in the Third Party" before a biracial Populist rally in Barbour County. Sometimes the commitment of black leaders counted for little among the rank-and-file, as was the case when James M. Black, together with white Populist M.W. Whatley, appealed in October to the black Republicans of Tallapoosa County—who listened politely, and then calmly endorsed the national Republican ticket.

But there were concrete reasons why thousands of blacks supported the agrarian cause. Colored Alliace men understood that Populist success would probably bring some relief to all levels of producing society. On a more immediate level it was pleasant to be appealed to for votes, and encouraging to be promised, as were the Negroes of Choctaw County, that "the colored men who helped the Kolb men . . . will be entitled to cast their votes in any primary election or in any meeting." In addition, men and women of both races participated in fostering the beginnings of an interracial unity beyond that afforded by the segregated structure of the Alliance. Thus the white Populists of Shelby County invited the "colored gentlemen" and their families to a meeting in Dogwood Beat, with the result that a large biracial crowd mingled there. Though the frauds of August and November prevent their numbers from being assessed accurately, ordinary black folk all over Alabama sought to escape their dual roles as the scapegoat and trump card of Bourbon politics. If their efforts were generally unsuccessful, they were not wasted upon the white organizers of the People's Party.
A thorough historian of Alliance-Populism has argued that populists, as they operated under the influence of their movement culture, often became more sensitive to its democratic implications. In other words, reformers working for their own dignity and freedom came to realize the logic of including black men as full partners in a "class" vision of society. The life of Joseph Manning furnishes an example of this increasing racial sensitivity—and the summer of 1892 was for him an important time of racial perception. For all his work in Georgia, Manning's travels in the Alabama Black Belt represent probably his first serious campaigning in a predominantly black area. Joseph had always thought that black farmers formed an important part of the working class, and the experiences of his summer on the road formed the basis of an unshakable conviction that black voters were actively, and worthily, reform-minded. He decided once and for all that the Black Belt machines were "a corrupt and truculent minority, opposed alike by a majority of whites and blacks."\(^52\)

Manning spoke in such Black Belt counties as Dallas, Hale, and Perry, in fulfillment of his promise to cover as much territory as possible. Few anecdotes of these journeys exist, but one will serve to show the changed state of perception possible within the framework of agrarian fellowship. Manning was speaking at a different county seat each day; at the conclusion of one such meeting he shook the hand of "an aged colored man" who had waited to talk to him. If he was gratified when the man told him: "I heard you yesterday at Marion, and I felt I had to get here today to hear you again," he was astonished when he realized that this "old citizen had driven two young oxen hitched to a two-wheeled cart . . . far into the preceding night."
order to arrive on time. But the incident stuck in his mind for another reason. "There was a look of understanding," Manning saw, and "a quality of plain intelligence in that man, and his conversation and demeanor."

Racial prejudices are not destroyed at once. But by the autumn of 1892, Joseph was more knowledgeable as to the deprivations of the "colored farm workers in the Black Belt" and more determined than ever to fight for the political and economic rights of all Alabamians. 53

In the nineteenth century, blacks and women were lumped together as political incompetents. Male Populists, though they sometimes patronized one group as much as the other, understood that the lot of Southern women was hard, a monstrous function of the cycle of debt into which rural people had fallen. In this vein, Manning cried out from the stump:

See mothers, barefooted, shabbily clothed, in the hot sun hoeing or plowing, because father and son have failed to earn the tribute that a power greater than Caesar is heaping on them day by day . . . My God! To what have we come? 54

A number of farm wives and daughters, however, were not resigned to passivity in defeat, or in the reform movement. Indeed when the National Woman's Alliance was formed in 1892 an Alabamian, Mrs. M.B. Cloud, was one of its charter members; as such she was committed to working for "the full and unconditional use of the ballot." 55 Within a year the concept of a feminist agrarianism had made some headway in Alabama, and "Mrs. M.D." of Dale County could write, mildly but firmly:

Some people seem to think that the women have no right to their principles in regard to politics; but we are entitled to our opinion in regard to [political] robbery. 56
Women populists undoubtedly made their greatest impact in Alabama through the public prints. Nora Gaither's Walnut Grove *Progressive People* was the only Third Party newspaper edited by a woman, but many younger women participated in such journalistic activities as Miss Lela Stuckey's "written [news]paper" produced at the Alliance Cooperative School in Echo, Alabama. Numerous women also contributed articles and letters to the growing number of Populist weeklies. One of the most prolific of these writers was "Farmer's Daughter," who wrote for the Ozark *Banner*. By the spring of 1893, South Alabama Populists applauded as she criticized those Jeffersonians who still cherished sectional loyalty over higher principles:

> Prejudice has so long been king, has so long been enthroned in the hearts of the people of this country . . . that the voters have not studied the questions of legislation as they should.

Even after the People's Party collapsed, thousands of Alabama women continued to study politics and economics, and continued their habits of---all too often bitter---reflection. Georgia Chilton Mc Elderry, a Populist lady of Talladega, set down in 1897 her considered opinion of the Democratic governors elected in 1892 and 1894, Thomas G. Jones and William C. Oates:

> About the character of each I discovered traits of character inclining to the actually besotted state of conscienceless evil. In Jones it was more of the bold, and in Oates the sly, leering type of unscrupulousness.

Mountaineers, Confederate veterans, blacks, women: the response of these groups made the People's Party the most representative social force of nineteenth-century Alabama. In this important respect the promise of the Omaha convention was fulfilled. Working to forge the
hopeful coalition of Alabama Populism into a unity were a few dozen local orators and a small corps of strategists led by Joseph Manning, all engaged in "a work of tremendous usefulness . . . [and] needed political education." The ranks of the People's Party swelled dramatically indeed, but Alliance-Populism was not to be the wave of the future in Alabama. For the agrarian radicals, at the height of their effectiveness, faced a day of reckoning and defeat against which they had no recourse.

On August 1, in the words of Joseph Manning, the people of Alabama went to the polls and gave Reuben Kolb a "cyclonic victory." Later that day and for nearly a week thereafter, however, a determined body of "ballot-box stuffers, unscrupulous returning officers and unprincipled members of canvassing boards" counted him out. The official count gave the election to Jones by a margin of 126,959 to 115,524 votes. Jones, who carried only twenty-nine of sixty-six counties, won thanks to his lead in fifteen Black Belt counties, where he piled up whopping and unrealistic majorities aggregating 30,217 votes. Kolb, on the basis of reports made by his poll watchers, claimed majorities of 25,000 white and 15,000 black votes. In the opinion of recent students of the election there is little doubt that the Jeffersonian figures were more accurate than the official returns. Jones himself entertained doubts about the honesty of several local machines. The governor's correspondence is full of references to and accounts of fraud in which, to be fair, it must be said he had little part. The seriousness of the situation was summed up in a much-quoted letter by Chappell Cory, in which that redoubtable editor
displayed to the full his business-like qualities. "I may say," he advised Thomas Jones, "that nine-tenths of the white voters in Alabama believe you were counted in and Kolb counted out. The only question is, what proportion endorse it?" 63

From the standpoint of the Populists, the outcome of the election was a double misfortune, though the extent of the troubles which Kolb's defeat would cause the People's Party was not immediately apparent. Though Straightouts may have suspected, as the Washington, D.C., National Economist put it, "that if Kolb [had] succeeded in the race he would hold the same position toward real reform as ... Congressman Livingston of Georgia," the Jeffersonian leader became an unassailable martyr in defeat. 64 The frauds of 1892 likewise became an overnight symbol of all the frustrations of the Alliance, a point well understood by Horace Hood, editor of the Montgomery Journal, who predicted that

Ninety per cent of those who followed Captain Kolb . . . and Mr. Adams thus far under such desperate circumstances, with the intelligence of the towns and the combined force of the press and hundreds of speakers against them . . . are going to follow them to the end.65

Most obviously, the Democratic count-out upset the rationale and independence of the People's Party by demonstrating that no anti-Bourbon candidate could win a gubernatorial election in Alabama. The state had no contest law applicable to executive offices; the frauds which had been practiced against a conservative agrarian challenger could be redoubled with impunity against a radical opponent. Thus, in order to survive at all, Populists, Jeffersonians, and Republicans would have to make a common effort to overthrow the Organized Democratic Party con-
The vital issues of Alabama politics were simple, and even more fundamental than the agrarians' financial demands. The Populists did in fact continue their campaigns of education on the basis of Ocala-Omaha principles, but Joseph Manning, among others, comprehended that a change of emphasis was necessary:

The issue[s] of free speech, a fair vote and an honest count had been, through the developments of the conflict, made paramount to all else. People's Party leaders comprehended this. [Henceforth] the People's Party in Alabama fought its battles with this issue as dominant.66

Of the two agrarian parties the Jeffersonians were in the more enviable position. Not only would Kolb's vote have been sufficient to elect him governor in any previous campaign, but the "Jeffs" had elected forty-four state representatives and senators.67 From their position of relative strength and moral authority the Jeffersonian leaders were able to negotiate with all sides, making overtures to Populist and Republican forces while preserving their own facade of simon-pure Democracy. Thus in the months following the election Peyton G. Bowman, one of Kolb's closest advisors, journeyed to Republican Party headquarters in New York City, and Christopher Magee, a representative of the Republican national committee, conferred with Kolbite lieutenants in Birmingham.68 Simultaneously, Bowman demanded the statehouse of Alabama for Kolb on the grounds that the latter was the regularly elected Democratic candidate, and threatened to withhold the Jeffersonian vote from Grover Cleveland if Jones were not ousted by the courts, the legislature, or by resignation.69

But for all their show of confidence and political expertise, many high-ranking Jeffersonians, Kolb included, had been shocked by the August count-out into a consideration of radical means to secure justice.
When Frank Baltzell of the Montgomery *Alliance Herald* demanded of the Alliance, which was to meet at Cullman on August 9-11, assistance in petitioning President Harrison for a "republican form of government in Alabama," the renunciation of states' rights principles was the least revolutionary aspect of his proposal. As editor of the most prestigious Jeffersonian newspaper in Alabama, Baltzell proposed in addition that Alliancemen revenge themselves upon the Bourbons through a form of civil disobedience:

> Cut off the sinews of war and the enemy must go to the wall. Taxes hold up the government. Stop paying and the cramps set in at once.70

The most radical means of redress, of course, was violence, and a certain number of Jeffersonians began to consider the possibility of setting Kolb up in an alternate or "dual" administration to be maintained, if necessary, with force. In 1892 the *Alliance Herald* spoke glibly about such grim possibilities, as when it said of reformers in Pike County:

> If they had collected 500 determined men with guns, [and] made the conspirators against their rights correct the wrong or hung them, they would have adopted [an] effective remedy.71

Baltzell and his writers spoke for the conservative agrarians who, determined to secure redress, were thoroughly open-minded as to the method of accomplishing their aims. At Cullman, these individuals were noticeably ready to listen to the Populist point of view.

> At the state Alliance convention of 1892 and for a few weeks thereafter, anti-Bourbon forces closed ranks and the People's Party came as close to dominating the reform movement in Alabama as it
would be able to do for two years—despite the strong position of
the Jeffersonians. The agrarian order elected a Populist, B.W. Grace
of Talladega, as its state president. Adams, who delivered a spirited
address against Grover Cleveland, evidently stepped down on his own.
George Gaither and Joseph Manning were much in evidence at Cullman, the
later more knowledgeable than he had been two months before, and "a
center of admiration by his brethren" after his performance at Omaha.
The Populist executive committee had arranged for James Field to
attend the meetings, and the Virginian moved easily among the Alliance-
men, combining personal charm and folks tales with an urgent appeal
for the People's Party. "We have got to win," he told them. "[The] con-
dition of need is such that we must win." The old tug-of-war between
Populists and Jeffersonians was muted, and all of the leaders present
contributed to the resolutions adopted. To no one's surprise, the
Alliance congratulated Kolb for his "victory" of August 1, and voted
its condemnation of "the ghoulish hand of the political boss." For the
Populists, there was the satisfaction of having wrenched the Alliance
forever from its Democratic moorings, in the form of a resolution
written by Joseph Manning:

We believe that the time has come when every freeman
is called on to resist encroachment upon our rights
of suffrage. Now therefore . . . we declare our
independence of the old tricky machine, and pledge
ourselves to continue our efforts for the Ocala
demands.74

During the course of the proceedings, P.G. Bowman announced that the
reform parties would hold a convention for the purpose of nominating
congressional candidates and an electoral ticket. The date of this
nominating convention was speedily set for September 15, and when the
Cullman gathering broke up after a spirited Populist rally, the long-expected Democratic frauds must have appeared, however briefly, indirectly to have benefited the People's Party. 75

In the weeks that followed there were further indications that a sentiment of angry political independence was spreading across Alabama. As county-level meetings were held to select delegates to the upcoming nominating convention, it was evident that a growing minority of the plain folk were willing to support James B. Weaver. In five counties (Chambers, Conecuh, Lowndes, St. Clair, and Tallapoosa) the People's Party was endorsed or Populist clubs formed for the first time. 76 In nine counties (Barbour, Bibb, Dallas, Fayette, Geneva, Lee, Marshall, Perry, and Tuscaloosa) a previously existing Populist organization was strengthened. 77 In most of these meetings Populists and Jeffersonians kept their identities separate, but in two counties the Third Party emerged as the dominant party in a previously Kolbite community. Dale County Jeffersonians, stirred by the Populism of editor Tom Cox of the Ozark Banner, voted to fuse completely with the People's Party there. Cox subsequently proclaimed that "Alabama is safe in the custodianship of the crystallized Jeffersonian Democracy, ... and well may its other name and synonym, the People's Party, suit the time." 78 And in Choctaw County, one of Kolb's few Black Belt strongholds, agrarians completed a transition toward radicalism which had begun with the Democratic Presidential nomination of Grover Cleveland in June. The prospect of voting for an ironbound Bourbon had opened their eyes to the fact that "the old parties [have] ignore[d] all of the demands of the agricultural class," while the Omaha convention demonstrated that "the platform of the People's Party embod[ies these] same" demands. The
Choctaw Countians, without deserting Kolb, pledged themselves to work for Weaver and national reform.79

Yet the Populist gains of July and August, though they were impressive, could change neither the basic political situation in Alabama nor the deep-rooted political instincts of Alabamians. Radical Straightouts remained a distinct minority among agrarians, and Populism in the newly awakened counties was covered over with a heavy veneer of traditional loyalism and Kolbism. Samuel Adams, for instance, accepted the chairmanship of the Bibb County People's Party with the promise that he would "go no farther than a change of name, and preserve all the essential principles of Democracy."80 As the long-time political observer Robert McKee reminded his correspondents P.G. Bowman and Frank Baltzell, most Alabamians counted among their principles a reluctance to vote for other than a Democratic presidential candidate. Urging the Jeffersonian leaders to avoid the taint of supporting Weaver (thus seeming to support Harrison indirectly), McKee advised: "It is a good time to be as innocent as doves and as wise as serpents."81 Kolb, for one, took McKee's advice to heart. Shortly after the September 15 convention had been slated to meet at Lakeview in Jefferson County, the ex-Commissioner wrote to one of his friends in defense of his torturous and contradictory political course:

I am the same Democrat I have always been ... and what we are after is making the opposition come to terms ... Our executive committee deemed it best to fuse with the People's Party and beat all [the Democratic] congressmen this fall, [but] ... as to putting out an electoral ticket, that part of the call is only a blind. None of our executive committee favor putting out an electoral ticket at all, but we thought it best not to let the public know about this yet ... as matters stand now we are keeping all parties in the dark on what we shall do.82
By September 15, Joseph Manning was ready to approach the vagaries of Alabama politics with considerable realism. Manning knew that it was a matter of public speculation whether or not the Jeffersonians would openly endorse Weaver. He knew also that Kolb and his chief advisers were in conference with such Republicans as Robert Moseley and Christopher Magee. Amid these complicated maneuvers Joseph was determined, as he told the Age-Herald, to "put out a straight Weaver electoral ticket." But the young man who had "practically created the Third Party in Alabama" understood the altered issues and priorities of reform politics; his aim was to work with the Jeffersonians and Republicans for a coalition congressional slate, in exchange for tacit support of a slate of Weaver electors. Manning was aware, too, of the tentative nature of many recent conversions to Populism. Therefore he viewed the Lakeview convention, not as a permanent unification of reform forces, but as an important opportunity to continue his "campaign of education [and] fight for the freedom of the people of Alabama and the great producers of the union."

The educational possibilities at Lakeview were immense. Five executive committees, and over 800 delegates of every political background were present; of them all, the Populists had the clearest course and program. Through a fine work of coordination, moreover, James Field, James Weaver, and Mary E. Lease attended the convention and were available to reformers at the Florence Hotel in Birmingham. Speeches of sectional reconciliation delivered by Weaver and Lease took up most of the opening session, and early the next day Manning introduced an old Alliance colleague from Georgia, one J.H. Turner, who led cheers for Tom Watson and called upon Alabamians to unify themselves
for a straightout campaign. By the time that Manning was ready to
speak on September 16, his Populist educational program was pro-
ceeding nicely.

Manning knew that he could not sweep his varied congregation into
the People’s Party at one stroke, and he chose his points according
to the long-term needs of the movement. First, he gave a highly
sarcastic treatment of Thomas Jones and all the "great sneaks" who
were his adherents, dramatically portraying Grover Cleveland telegraph-
ing congratulations to the governor upon the successful conclusion
of the August frauds. These efforts to connect national and state-level
Democracy in mutual infamy were so successful that the convention
subsequently passed a resolution stating that "the election of
Cleveland means a perpetuation of the fraud in Alabama elections." But Manning had fashioned his speech with an eye to making his first
public endorsement of Kolb, and at the end of his remarks upon
Cleveland and Jones, he carried the awkward moment off well. "If you
do not rise up and defend your rights and your Kolb," he predicted,
"your children will curse you."

Joseph was vitally concerned with shaping the opinion of the
delegates upon two related issues: the "Negro Question" and the
proper means of unifying the reform movement. Concerning the first
there had been much discussion, since "negro votes, or stuffed ballots
as you please" had provided the margin of victory for Jones.
Manning feared—correctly, as events would show—that white agrarians
would fall into the trap of advocating the "Mississippi Plan" of eliminat-
ing black voting in order to assure "peace" and "honesty" among white
politicians. He was convinced that a majority of blacks had supported
Kolb, and he told his listeners so, in the meantime fortifying them as best he could against racist propaganda. "They say [that] the negro question is paramount," he said scornfully. "You know it is not the negro whom you have to fear, but white men who are your enemies."92

Manning clearly hoped that a high-minded presentation of the racial issue might serve to bring the Jeffersonians within the Populist fold. He had experimented with various attempts to promote agrarian unity and would continue to do so, but at Lakeview he concentrated upon what ultimately proved to be his best course—an emphasis upon building an interracial "clasa" unity in order to secure ballot freedom. Glancing at the Democratic reporters taking notes and at several agents of the state and national Democratic parties, Manning proclaimed that "the opposition wanted to throw dissention into this convention," but "thanked God they could not do it." Then he launched into a peroration which was both a challenge to the audience and a statement of the one issue which had brought them together:

There [is] something in this movement that makes every white man and every colored man feel that the perpetuity of our institutions, the preservation of everything that is sacred socially, depends upon [its] success.93

At the end of his speech Manning looked ahead to the work of education which would be necessary if Alabama were to be redeemed from the Bourbons, and he urged the Lakeview delegates to build upon the spirit of inquiry already moving through the producing classes:
The great rank and file of the people have stood by looking hungry and hollow; but instead of burning pine knots in celebrating victorious Democratic presidents, they have been at home burning pine knots reading upon the issues of the hour.94

When Manning sat down, Reuben Kolb rose to make a long-awaited speech. No less accurate, it was considerably less visionary than Manning's oration. Observing that his people had wanted "harmony in the [Democratic] Party if we could get it fairly and honestly," Kolb gave a detailed account of the mechanics of fraud in Dallas, Lowndes, Wilcox, and other Black Belt counties. When he had finished this necessary expose of the revolutionary tactics used by the organized Democrats to keep themselves in power, the convention passed a joint platform of "the Jeffersonian and People's Party of Alabama," which was headed with the demand for "a free ballot and a fair count." Then, with the public blessing of the representatives of the Moseley, or Lily White wing of the state Republican Party, the reformers chose a congressional ticket composed of leading Jeffersonians and Populists. The Populists chose in addition a slate of Weaver-Field electors, but the "Jeffs" refused to commit themselves irrevocably to one presidential candidate.95 With the joint business of the meeting over, the delegates were free to go forth in a campaign which, all too often, would reflect the confusion of its beginning.

An authority on the agrarian revolt in Alabama has commented that the reform combination of 1892 lacked organization and coordination. Certainly the Lakeview "fusionists" were plagued by a lack of funds, and by the conflicting ends of the allied parties. The Lily White Republicans, who had tacitly agreed not to campaign for Republican
presidential nominee Benjamin Harrison, provided endless grist for Democratic mills, as when a prominent "rad" announced in the presence of Chairman Moseley: "It makes no difference whether we elect Harrison by the Weaver route or not, we are going to elect Harrison." Joseph Manning, for his part, became embroiled with the supporters of a disappointed Populist congressional candidate, J.B. Ware of Jefferson County, who held a rump "convention" to denounce him as a tool of the Jeffersonians and "traitor to the cause." Furious, Joseph described Ware and his faction as boodlers "coming in the people's name like wolves in sheep's clothing," and defended the Lakeview convention in its most favorable light, as the grand common impulse of diverse groups:

Men in high places are swearing to override the public will, the devil is in the saddle, and a cursed system is overthrowing the homes of the land. The Lakeview convention was a tremendous recognition of these calamitous truths, and a response of patriotic men to patriotic duty.97

Undoubtedly the weakest reeds in the reform coalition were the Jeffersonian Democrats. Kolb, who consoled himself that the "electoral ticket put out at Lakeview was a mistake, but . . . no mistake of mine," was still torn by his accustomed Democratic loyalism, and by the desire to compromise with the powerful Bourbon machine. Despite the persuasive potential of his vast influence, therefore, he simply "advocated the election of the [Lakeview] ticket without mentioning the names of Weaver or Cleveland." Incredibly, Kolb and several of his lieutenants refused to campaign against the "organized" ticket. "[I] did not even attempt to persuade any of my friends from voting for it who felt so inclined," he admitted, "and many of them did so."98

Indeed they did. When the results of the November 9 election came in, Cleveland had beaten Weaver in Alabama by 138,123 to 85,128 votes, and
the Democrats had won all of the congressional races. Though many observers, including Manning, felt that the Populist and fusionist tickets had made an impressive first showing, no less than twenty counties which had voted for Kolb in August voted for Cleveland in November. The Jeffersonians were in danger of "returning to their first love," a Democratic editor observed. To the Populists, it must have seemed that a tremendous amount of work remained to be done if the reform movement were to remain in the field. Few of the Third Party men, however, were willing to give up.

In the short span of eight months, Joseph Manning and his cohorts had built a People's Party from the ground up and made it a force in state politics. Manning himself had become famous as the Boy Orator, the Evangel, a fearless spokesman of the Alliance gospel. At the same time, he had shown himself willing to adjust to a complex situation—to work with conservative agrarians and Republicans even as he tried to influence them. Most important of all, he had developed a remarkable personal style, a mixture of conviction, optimism, voluble wit, and personal magnetism. Young as he was, he was a power in his own right. In the months to come he was one of a few men who kept the agrarian coalition from destroying itself.
Footnotes to Chapter III


2. Birmingham *Age-Herald*, June 19, 1892.

3. Rogers, *One-Gallused Rebellion*, 221, and Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, July 14, 1892, quoting the Montgomery *Advertiser*.

4. Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, July 7, 1892, quoting the Chicago *Inter-Ocean*.


7. J.P. Speer to T.G. Jones, August 22, 1892, in the Jones Papers. Speer was from the Black Belt, where "palpable frauds" turned in overwhelming majorities for Jones. Even so Kolb carried five predominantly black counties: Choctaw, Chambers, Macon, Lee and Pickens. See below for further details.

8. Birmingham *News*, June 11, 1892, and Butler *Choctaw Advocate*, July 13, 1892. Long after Jones had been reelected, he was still receiving advice to the effect that "the thing to preach to the ignorant classes is white versus nigger and the danger of the Force Bill." See R.N. Murphy to T.G. Jones, September 29, 1892, in the Jones Papers.


10. Birmingham Alabama *Reformer*, May 26, 1892, the Columbiana *Shelby Chronicle*, June 8, 1892, the Union Springs *Herald*, June 8, 1892, quoting the Opelika *News* and Birmingham *Age-Herald*, June 19, 20, 1892.


12. Birmingham *Age-Herald*, June 14, 1892, and Anniston *Weekly Times*, June 18, 1892.
13. Taking into consideration all of those counties in which Populist cells seem to have been organized since 1891, the total of "Populist" counties comes to 25 at least. No source names all the residences of the 49 delegates to the June 23 convention, but since several counties sent more than one delegate—Clay County sent five—it seems certain that no more than 30 counties were represented. See the Birmingham *Age-Herald*, June 23, 24, 1892, and the Ashland Clay County Advance, July 1, 1892.


15. Dadeville *Tallapoosa New Era*, June 9, 1892.

16. *Ibid.*, June 30, 1892. Norton of Mobile, an Anti-Populist Knight of Labor, had accused Manning and Gaither of "gag rule" at the May 30 meeting. For Manning's angry denial, see the Birmingham *Age-Herald*, June 7, 1892.

17. Birmingham *Age-Herald*, June 24, 1892. Even this indirect endorsement of Kolb was bitterly received in Populist circles in Alabama and the nation. Note, for example, the advice given by the Washington, D.C., *National Watchman*, quoted in the Dadeville *Tallapoosa New Era*, June 30, 1892: "During the last three years Mr. Kolb has been riding the Alliance for his personal political gain, and the time has come to throw him over. For three years he has headed off all reform by dividing the people, the Alliance, and the reform movement in general. . . Now that he has been defeated he lacks the manhood to accept it, but has started up as an independent Democrat, and by that means intends to kill out the People's Party movement in that state."

18. Birmingham *Age-Herald*, June 24, 1892.


20. *Ibid.* The *Age-Herald* does not say where T.M. Johnson was from, or whether there were other black men in the hall.

21. J.M. Whitehead to T.C. Jones, June 25, 1892, in the Jones Papers. The one-legged Whitehead understood the danger of opposing the Bourbon regime; he had been left for dead after a thrashing by political opponents in 1884. In 1892, his press was broken and scattered in a night-time raid at Greenville, and he was mobbed in Bullock County. See Manning, *Politics of Alabama*, 29, and Rogers, *One-Gallused Rebellion*, 265.

22. Dadeville *Tallapoosa New Era*, July 7, 1892, and Ozark Banner, June 23, 1892.


25. Manning, *Fadeout*, 30, 33. By 1892 the Knights of Labor had fewer than 100,000 members (as opposed to 750,000 members in 1886) and was rapidly declining in comparison with Samuel Gompers' American Federation of Labor. In the same year Donnelly's promising Alliance movement in Minnesota began to fall apart, partly because he failed to comprehend the cooperative and educational techniques of Alliance-Populism. For further information see Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise*, 239-260, 307, 308, and Melvyn Dubofsky, *Industrialism and the American Worker, 1865-1920* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1975), 54-60.

26. The Omaha platform, together with the stirring preamble written by Donnelly, can be found in John D. Hicks, *The Populist Revolt: A History of the Farmer's Alliance and the People's Party* (1931; reprint ed., Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), Appendix F, 442.

27. Manning, *Fadeout*, 37. The Omaha platform was a document of remarkable insight into monetary problems, but without "a social theory of sufficient breadth ... to speak with special power to the millions of 'plain people' in the nation's cities." See Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise*, 310-311. In Alabama, however, coal miners and other laboring men appeared at Populist and Jeffersonian rallies, and frequently voted for Kolb. The Knights of Labor were strong in Birmingham, but the workers' insurgency stemmed chiefly from the frequency with which Democratic state administrations used troops to put down strikes from 1889-1894. See Robert D. Ward and William Warren Rogers, *Labor Revolt in Alabama: The Great Strike of 1894* (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1965), passim.


29. Gresham was a Midwestern judge known for his independent-minded integrity. He flirted with the idea of becoming a Populist, but refused to be a candidate at the last. See Hicks, *Populist Revolt*, 233, and Mathew Josephson, *The Politicos* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1963), 504, 521, 580, 608. Weaver had been a Greenback Party congressman and presidential candidate in the 1880's. He was unpopular in the South because troops under his command had allegedly committed atrocities at Pulaski, Tennessee. See the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, October 13, 1892, quoting the Birmingham News.

31. According to the Birmingham Age-Herald, July 9, 1892, Manning was murderously attacked on the train going home. Supposedly, he had been shadowed for some time before the Omaha convention by a wild-eyed man. To Manning's discomfort, the fellow turned up mysteriously at Omaha and appeared upon the "special" traveling south. There he would have assassinated the sleeping "Boy Orator" as the train pulled into St. Joseph, Missouri, had not a delegate from Kansas interposed. The story is dramatic, but probably not true. Only one other newspaper picked it up, months later, and facetiously. See the Eufaula Times and News, October 13, 1892.

32. Birmingham Age-Herald, July 8, 1892.

33. Manning, Five To Twenty-five, 44.


35. Ozark Banner, May 4, 1893, quoting the Greenville Living Truth. The problem of apathy was biracial, though it was most obvious to the white Populists among the hill people. Others, however recognized the slough of despond into which the black folk were sliding. In the 1880's, Booker T. Washington wrote to George W. Cable concerning black tenant farmers: "They can not pay 25 & 30 per cent interest on the dollar and many of them have reached the conclusion that no change can make their condition worse." See Louia R. Harlan, Booker T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader, 1856-1901 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 198.

36. Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 38-39, 42.

37. Ibid. Compare Manning's approach with the following speech taken from J.H. Whiteshead's Living Truth and reprinted in the Ozark Banner, May 4, 1893:

How many of you are obliged to keep your children in the field, insted of sending' them to school? . . .
How many of you are able to keep your wives and daughters out of the field? . . .
How many of you are able to make a crop this year without goin' in debt?

Of course, the fact that the plain people were interested in hearing first about issues close to home does not mean that they were uninterested in educating themselves upon the larger issues of currency regulation. In June, 1892, one of his lieutenants wrote to Joseph Wheeler that "the money question with many here is the only politics in vogue, and money put out by the government to the people, perhaps you can gather my meaning."
The writer asked Wheeler for a good Democratic answer to the sort of question which must have offered golden opportunities to Populist speakers: "If there be an increase of circulation by the government, how does [the government] diffuse the same to get it into the hands of the people, especially those with nothing to give for it?" See P.A. Ross to Joseph Wheeler, June 22, 1892, in the Wheeler Papers.

38. Ozark Banner, May 4, 1893, quoting the Greenville Living Truth.


40. Ibid., 34, 86. It is impossible to assess the effect of economic coercion upon the tenant farmers of Alabama during the elections of 1892. Since the turnout of over 230,000 voters in August set a record for participation, many tenants must have gone to the polls regardless of threats. In the last analysis, the supply merchants of the South were each dependent upon a territorial monopoly of business; a merchant could squeeze, but not ruin his customers if he wanted to stay in business himself. See Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 221-223, and Ransom and Sutch, One Kind of Freedom, 172-137. One type of Democratic financial pressure is clearly identifiable; Reform politicians were unable to borrow money. Manning's letters to national Populist figures are filled with appeals for financial aid: "I cannot secure any funds whatever on any securities I can give in Alabama, for our enemies don't accommodate us Populists." See J.C. Manning to Davis H. Waite, November 10, 1893, in the Davis Hanson Waite Papers, Colorado State Archives.

41. Members of the professions were fairly rare in the People's Party, but such men as "Professor" H.C. Simmons and Dr. F.L. Fielder were not unique. In 1891, members of the Alliance in Dale County founded a "Cooperative School" at Echo, in order to remove their children and sympathetic teachers from the Bourbon discrimination of the existing school system. See the Ozark Banner, January 26, 1893. Agrarian businessmen were rare, but in Bibb, Chilton, and Perry counties, political hostilities and hard times combined in 1892-1893 to touch off a small war of threats and occasional gin-burnings between Democratic gin-owners and merchants and such Alliancemen as Grattan B. Crowe and Jim Fountain. Crowe was a doctor trained at Edinburgh University, a Jeffersonian, and a man of known eccentric and violent tendencies. At one point, Governor Jones was so alarmed by the Perry County violence that he hired the best secret agents available to investigate. For a Democratic view of the affair, see the "Reports of Agent T.N.V.," contained in W.A. Pinkerton to Thomas C. Jones, October 25, 31, November 2, 1893, in the Jones Papers. See also Hackney, Populism to Progresivism, 28.
42. Manning, Fadeout, 80-81. Another important radical preacher was A.J. Hearn of Choctaw County; Samuel Adams himself was a Baptist "Parson." Most rural congregations in Alabama were split politically, as were most communities. There are no accounts of Populists ostracizing Democratic ministers, but B.O. Flower of the Washington, D.C., National Watchman accused Democratic clerics of "fostering a savage spirit in the minds of the very young." Flower also worried that the Bourbon-controlled educational system inculcated intolerance and a "blunting, soul-shrivelling influence." See the Ashland People's Party Advocate, November 16, 1894, quoting the National Watchman.

43. Birmingham Age-Herald, July 29, 1892. On July 27, Manning was ambushed at night as he was boarding his train after a speech. All of the depot lights had been put out, but the darkness proved to be his friend. The incident is fully described in Manning, Politics of Alabama, 26-28, including the comment of a minister, L.F. Witten of Jasper, that if such incidents were allowed to go unchecked, "sermons will have to be pleasant . . . and editors must agree with those in authority . . . or [be] swung up by the thumbs." For an example of anti-Manning sentiment by a prominent citizen of Lauderdale County, see Emmett O'Neal to Thomas G. Jones, July 22, 1892, in the Jones Papers.

44. Manning, Fadeout, 34. The two brothers were Benjamin Guinn, editor of the Oxford Night Hawk (Democratic) and J.M.K. Guinn editor of the Oxford Voice (Alliance-Jeffersonian). See the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, April 28, 1892. In Clay County the Manning brothers kept their political enmity short of blows or vile language; such pacific opposition was not practiced in the Whatley family, however; Edgar L. Whatley, editor of the Ashland Clay County Advance from 1895-1897, and J.W. Whatley, editor of the Ashland People's Party Advocate during 1896, attacked each other bitterly in print. A typical shooting took place in Coosa County at Half-Acre community, when Democrat W.W. Rutland killed Populist Bud Sims after Sims accused Rutland of "stealing his vote." See the Rockford Coosa County Advocate, November 10, 1892.

45. Manning, Fadeout, 54. Manning probably understood, that Negroes in the Black Belt were "helpless" because they had been subjected to continuing terrorism. See William Warren Rogers and Robert D. Ward, August Reckoning: Jack Turner and Racism in Post-Civil War Alabama (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973), passim. Lynching of Negroes reached an all-time high of 187.5 in an average year during the years of the Populist revolt. See C. Vann Woodward, Origins of the New South, 1877-1913 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951), 351.
46. Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 233, and Montgomery Advertiser, September 11, 1892. The Colored Alliance of Alabama was a fruitful source of black Populists. The national order had taken a stand in favor of a Third Party at Ocala, by which time the Alabama chapters boasted 100,000 members. See Gerald H. Gaither, Blacks and the Populist Revolt: Ballots and Bigotry in the New South (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1977), 13, 22.

47. Eufaula Times and News, September 15, 1892.

48. Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, October 27, 1892. An indeterminate minority of black Republicans followed "Black and Tan" leader William Stevens of Calhoun County in 1892. Stevens was a mercurial freebooter who alternated between advocating a straight Harrison ticket for the Alabama GOP and cooperating with the Jones wing of the Alabama Democracy. His opportunistic point of view was shared by such Negro orators as J.M. Ross of Jefferson County, who told a rally that "the Republican Party in this state is composed of Negroes, and if we do not organize for ourselves we may never expect anything." The black Republicans of Birmingham responded to Ross’ speech by voting to endorse the course of Chairman Moseley; not all of the Lily-Whites in Alabama were white. See the Birmingham Age-Herald, July 8, 1892.

49. Butler Choctaw Alliance, October 19, 1892.

50. Birmingham Age-Herald, July 8, 1892. In Talladega and Coosa counties, voters were entertained by a black brass band touring on behalf of the Weaver-Field ticket. See the Rockford Coosa County Advocate, November 3, 1892.

51. Goodwyn, Democratic Promise, 276-307.

52. Ashland People’s Party Advocate, January 17, 1896, Italics added. The quotation is taken from a speech Manning gave before the Union League of Philadelphia.

53. Manning, Fadeout, 27, 81-82, and Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 36-38. See also the Centreville People’s Reflector, October 13, 1892.

54. Butler Choctaw Alliance, July 18, 1894. In 1894, when Manning was running for the legislature from Clay County, his statements reflected a greater knowledge of the importance of women in the Populist movement. He made a special point of inviting the ladies to hear him speak, and predicted: "If the husband does not support the cause of justice, the wife will stop supporting the husband." See the Ashland People’s Party Advocate, June 22, 1894.

56. Ozark Banner, February 2, 1893.

57. Ibid., January 26, 1893. The Echo school published as its motto an activist pledge to "educate the mind to think, the heart to feel and the body to act."

58. Ibid., April 13, 1893.


60. Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 44.


62. An analysis of the geographical distribution of the official vote can be found in Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 221-223. For examples of how pro-Kolb boxes were nullified on technicalities see Ibid., 225. Kolb's claims can be found in Manning, Politics of Alabama, 9, 12-14; one example will suffice.
Selma Beat in Dallas County cast 1400 votes according to the count of reformist poll watchers, but returned an official majority of 2300 for Jones out of 2642 votes cast. In general, and contrary to state law, the Jeffersonians were denied representation among local polling officials.

63. Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 222-224, Hackney, Populism to Progressivism, 22, and Goodwyn, Democratic Promise, 324.
An observer of the election concluded, as does this study, that all of the intimidation and propaganda of 1892 had little effect upon the turnout of agrarians in August: "With everything against them that is counted effective in political campaigning, the plain democratic people have asserted their right, as against committees, to select their candidates." See Robert McKee to Willis Brewer, August 7, 1892, in the McKee Papers.
Letters in the Jones Papers which confirm the verdict of fraud rendered above include J.P. Speer to T.G. Jones, August 22, 1892, and Chappell Cory to T.G. Jones, August 14, 1892, in the Jones Papers. See also Rogers, One Gallused Rebellion, 224-225.

64. Washington, D.C., National Economist, quoted in the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, September 1, 1892.

65. Montgomery Journal, quoted in the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, August 11, 1892.


67. Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 222, 226.
68. New York World, quoted in the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, September 15, October 27, 1892, and Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 229.

69. Bowman and Kolb were quoted as having said that Cleveland could never carry Alabama unless Kolb were recognized as governor. They did not, however, say how this was to be done; the legislature would not meet until December. See the Atlanta Constitution, quoted in the Eufaula Times and News, September 8, 1892. Rufus Rhodes, editor of the Birmingham News, proposed to placate the Jeffersonians through the selection of a new slate of Cleveland electors chosen from members of both Democratic factions. Nothing came of Rhodes' plan, but on August 21 Thomas Jones announced: "If I am not fairly elected I do not want the office," and promised that the election would be thoroughly investigated by the upcoming legislature. See the Birmingham Age-Herald, August 21, 22, 1892, and Chappell Cory to T.G. Jones, August 14, 1892, in the Jones Papers.

70. Montgomery Alliance Herald, quoted in the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, August 18, 1892. The Cullman convention took no action upon Baltzell's proposals. His ideas, however, formed the basis of the Populist strategy of 1894-1896.

71. Ibid.


73. Manning, Fadeout, 28, 79-80.

74. Birmingham Age-Herald, August 10, 1892, and Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, August 11, 1892.

75. Prattville Progress, August 19, 1892, Rockford Coosa County Advocate, August 18, 1892, and Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 227-228. After the convention was adjourned, Gaither read the Omaha platform to the delegates, and Manning spoke for two hours. Kolb himself took part in the rally—a far cry from that of May 30.

76. Montgomery Advertiser, September 11, 1892, and Birmingham Age-Herald, September 11, 1892. In predominantly black Chambers County, Populists met and endorsed the action of J.H. Harris, known as "Uncle Joe," a long-time Alliance figure who came out for the People's Party at this time. In Conecuh County Populists, Jeffersonians, and Republicans met to pledge support for Weaver and to name likely congressional candidates. In Lowndes County, Jeffersonians welcomed Populist M.W. Whatley, who discussed the wisdom of fusion in the congressional races before an approving crowd. In St. Clair County over 100 "Weaverites" and Republicans agreed to cooperate in November, and in Tallapoosa County an ex-Jeffersonian, J.P. Oliver, formed a People's Party organization. See attached Map #5.
77. Montgomery Advertiser, September 11, 1892, Birmingham Age-Herald, September 11, 1892, Eufaula Times and News, September 15, 1892, and Centreville People's Reflector, September 22, 1892. In Barbour County a complete county organization was perfected under the direction of one C.C. Lee. In Dallas County, J.F. Washington spoke to a meeting of Populists and Jeffersonians, who heard the Colored Alliance man after ejecting white Democratic reporters. In Fayette County, about 100 'Weaverites' laid plans for an county-wide organization, while in Geneva County, an enthusiastic meeting endorsed the Weaver ticket and made plans to revive the organization of 1891. In Lee County, 125 Populists and Jeffersonians were 'very enthusiastic' over the prospective fusionist convention of September 15. In Marshall County, another of the original Populist centers of 1891, a county organization was revived with Jeff Bell, 'the noted Third-Partyite of Cranford Beat' as chairman. In Perry County, sixty-five men of both races elected a county executive committee during a strictly Populist meeting. Proceedings in Tuscaloosa County were dominated by Jeffersonians, most of whom expressed a willingness to vote for Weaver. See attached Map #5.

78. Ozark Banner, June 30, September 1, 15, 1892. Cox's Banner made its appearance in May as a Jeffersonian weekly prone to ridicule the People's Party. By the end of June, however, Cox was printing laudatory reports of Populist conventions around the country.

79. Butler Choctaw Alliance, September 21, October 19, 1892. The leader of Choctaw County Populism was Sheriff Joseph M. Young, forceful editor of the Choctaw Alliance.

80. Centreville People's Reflector, September 22, 1892.

81. Robert McKee to Peyton G. Bowman, June 15, 1892, and Robert McKee to Frank Balszeli, August 7, 1892, in the McKee Papers.

82. R.F. Kolb to Judge T.A. Street, August 22, 1892, in the Oliver Day Street Papers, University of Alabama.

83. In an interview with the Atlanta Constitution, reprinted in the Eufaula Times and News, September 8, 1892, 'Kolb made it clear that any electoral ticket named at Lakeview would be the responsibility of the People's Party. See also the Birmingham Age-Herald September 11, 1892, and Rogers, One-Gallusad Rebellion, 229.

84. Birmingham Age-Herald, September 11, 1892, and Montgomery Advertiser, September 15, 1892.

85. Birmingham Age-Herald, September 17, 1892. Manning had ready for distribution 1000 copies of a pamphlet, 'Financial Legislation,' which 'was said to have carried the state of Kansas' for Populism.
86. Montgomery Advertiser, September 15, 16, 1892. The five executive committees represented the People's Party, the Jeffersonian Democrats, the "Organized" Democrats, the "Black and Tan" Republicans, and the "Lily-White" Republicans.

87. Montgomery Advertiser, September 16, 17, 1892, Birmingham Age-Herald, September 16, 17, 1892 and Ozark Banner, September 22, 1892.

88. Montgomery Advertiser, September 17, 1892. Cleveland was so incensed at Manning's story that he sent Jones a vehement telegram denying that he had ever sent congratulations--surely one of the most unusual messages ever sent by a presidential candidate to a newly reelected governor. See Grover Cleveland to T.G. Jones (copy), September 17, 1892, in the Michael L. Woods Papers, ADAH.

89. Montgomery Advertiser, September 17, 1892.

90. Robert McKee to Willie Brewer, August 7, 1892, in the McKee Papers.


92. Montgomery Advertiser, September 17, 1892.

93. Birmingham Age-Herald, September 17, 1892.

94. Ibid.

95. Kolb's speech is printed in full in the Centreville People's Reflector, September 22, 29, 1892. The joint platform can be found in the Montgomery Advertiser, September 17, 1892. This document, though it repeats many of the Omaha demands, is silent upon the Subtreasury. The Omaha platform was approved by the Populist delegates, however. For the congressional candidates and electoral ticket chosen at Lakeview, see the Prattville Progress, September 23, 1892, and the Union Springs Herald, September 21, 1892. The following Populists were unsuccessful congressional candidates in 1892: W.J. Mason, Covington County, first district; A.P. Longshore, Shelby county, fourth district; M.W. Whatley, Clay County, fifth district; J.M. Davis, Fayette County, sixth district; W.H. Wood, Cullman County, seventh district. The unsuccessful
candidate from the ninth and final district was Joseph H. Parsons, a brother of Lewis Parsons, Republican ex-governor. See Rogers, *One-Gallused Rebellion*, 232.

96. Rogers, *One-Gallused Rebellion*, 233, and the Rockford Coosa County Advocate, October 27, 1892. For the financing of the campaign see Samuel Adams' plea for contributions and disclaimer of having received funds from "capitalists, national bankers or corporations," in the Centreville People's Reflector, October 20, 1892.

97. Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, September 29, 1892, and Centreville People's Reflector, October 13, 1892.

98. R.F. Kolb to Judge T.A. Street, March 29, 1893, in the Street Papers.

99. Rogers, *One-Gallused Rebellion*, 233, Manning, Fadeout, 25, and Ashland Clay County Advance, November 11, 1892. County-by-county statistics can be found in the Montgomery Advertiser, November 11, 1892. Weaver carried fourteen counties: Bibb, Butler, Chilton, Choctaw, Clay, Conecuh, Coosa, Dale, Elmore, Lawrence, Limestone, Macon, St. Clair, and Winston, by majorities ranging from 29 in Dale County to 1300 in Elmore County. In twelve counties, Weaver lost by 250 or fewer votes: Autauga, Baldwin, Cleburne, Coffee, Covington, Crenshaw, Cullman, Geneva, Morgan, Randolph, Shelby, and Talladega. Of these twenty-six counties, at least eighteen were organized in some fashion by the People's Party. All of the above counties voted for Kolb in August, with the exceptions of Autauga, Baldwin, Conecuh, Morgan, and Talladega counties; Autauga, Choctaw, and Macon counties were Black Belt communities. In addition to the various "Kolb" counties which were lost narrowly, however, twelve Jeffersonian strongholds were lost to Weaver in November by margins ranging from 300 to 1400: Chambers, DeKalb, Etowah, Franklin, Henry, Lee, Lamar, Madison, Marshall, Pickens, Tallapoosa, and Tuscaloosa. It seems fair to conclude that the latter counties were lost because Kolb men voted for Cleveland. Months after the election Robert McKee took especial pains to point out that "Kolb claimed to be a Democrat. His friends claimed to be Democrats. He was supported by Democrats as a protest against acts of the state executive committee." McKee saw no contradiction in supporting both Kolb and Cleveland, nor did thousands of Jeffersonians. See Robert McKee to James E. Cobb, March 26, 1893, in the McKee Papers. For the geographical distribution of Weaver vote, see attached Maps #6 and #7.
CHAPTER IV

CHOOSING SIDES: THE REFORMIST CRISES OF 1893

The sixteen months from December 1892, to March 1894, were a confused, transitional time for the reform movement in Alabama. In the aftermath of the fall elections the two agrarian parties were "nominally divided," as Alliance president B.W. Groce put it, into several factions. At one extreme, an ultra-straightout group led by J.M. Whitehead, Philander Morgan, and J.B. Ware of Birmingham vowed opposition to Reuben Kolb and his treacherous "Jeffersonian gang." On the other extreme Kolb, Bowman, Baltzell, and A.T. Goodwyn of Elmore County found themselves pushed by events further and further from orthodox Democracy, though not without many backward glances toward "the party of the fathers." In addition, the Jeffersonians were forced to deal with a new class of recruits, led by William H. Skaggs, a reform-minded Democrat from Talladega. Skaggs and his followers were talented, influential, and thoroughly "respectable," but their financial views differed widely from those of Jeffersonian greenbackers such as Baltzell or Adams. In the center of all the factions were Joseph Manning and a majority of the People's Party, committed to a national reform movement but convinced that Populism could gain no permanent foothold in Alabama unless a broad coalition of "patriots" united to overthrow the Bourbon machine. During the first depression-ridden year of Grover Cleveland's second administration, these
varied groups criticized, threatened, and betrayed each other, without ceasing to work together for common ends. 2

For Joseph Manning, 1893 was a year of experimentation. He deeply believed that the events of the preceding year had accelerated a process of irrevocable change among the plain people. The liberation of farmers and workers from the sectional and racial prejudices fostered by the Democratic Party continued to be his first concern; the financial demands of Ocala and Omaha had, by 1893, receded into the background of the anti-Bourbon fight. He placed his faith in the growth of the People's Party as an agency of solidarity among producers, and he never doubted that victory would follow unity. "By adhering to principle we will win," he told Davis Waite, the recently elected Populist governor of Colorado, adding: "Right is ours, and right the day will win." Looking back upon 1893 as a frustrating interlude in his life, Manning declared that neither his beliefs nor his determination had changed:

There is no force on earth comparable to an awakened people, a people aroused to wrongs perpetrated, trusts betrayed and virtue outraged. The public is too greatly shaken up, the upheaval is too mighty to be merely sifted down by strategy. There are wrongs to be righted if not crimes to be avenged. Until this is done, the revolution of today is not at end. 3

Unfortunately, Manning was forced to operate on the level of "strategy" in order to deal with discontent within his own party, while coping with the Machiavellian tactics of the Jeffersonians. The very nature of Alabama politics had been defined by the contests of 1892, and like it or not, Manning, Gaither, Longshore, and other People's Party leaders were forced to maintain the Lakeview coalition and ex-
...upon their previously tacit support of Kolb. It was not just that the genial Jeffersonian had begun campaigning for the 1894 gubernatorial race over a year in advance. Rather, since the Organized Democracy had degenerated, in Chappell Cory's words, into a "party whose sole interrogation point has become--'can we count him out again?'," political preference had become for thousands of citizens a matter of basic decency. 4 "In 1894," said an experienced political observer, "Kolb will represent an issue of right and wrong that will make him stronger than last year." And the fate of free government in Alabama, as Manning knew, was wrapped up in the face of the Jeffersonian leader. "If Kolb is not made governor," he said, "it is useless for any reformer to discuss national politics." 5

Shortly after the November, 1892, election, the legislature met in Montgomery. As expected, the chief topic of discussion was "election reform," a subject upon which Democratic sentiment was divided. Early in the session a group of about twenty Bourbon "extremists" in the House of Representatives proposed the calling of a constitutional convention. Their avowed object was the adoption of the "Mississippi Plan" of suffrage restriction in Alabama. The necessary enabling legislation was defeated because most Democrats feared the potential influence of the Farmers' Alliance upon such a convention, but while the measure was being debated, conservative newspapers "admitted the election methods of the 'black belt' Democracy, and subscribed approval of acts for which in other states men are sent to the penitentiary." 6 Despite Governor Jones' promise of the preceding summer, moreover, the
legislative majority conducted only a perfunctory investigation of the August election. Likewise, the contest legislation proposed by Senator Albert T. Goodwyn lost after a series of complicated parliamentary maneuvers.\(^7\) After months of seeming inactivity, however, both houses passed an elections law, a measure billed as a compromise between the advocates of constitutional change and the more hesitant Democratic majority. This was the Sayre Law, an act destined to have a profound effect upon Alabama politics.

The Sayre Law was a complex statute of forty-eight sections designed, as Thomas Jones was said to have remarked, to "wipe out Kolbism, Third Partyism and Negroism." The bill's author, aristocratic Judge A.D. Sayre of Montgomery (chiefly known to posterity as the father-in-law of F. Scott Fitzgerald), thought it "something toward clearing up the moral-political atmosphere . . . [but] only a step in the set direction."\(^8\) The Judge and his party thus joined the mainstream of southern legislative practice, according to an authority on Democratic hegemony—for the "set direction" of election laws in the region was toward biracial disfranchisement. The platform upon which the Alabama Democracy had triumphed in 1892 contained a promise to extend the rule of "the wise and virtuous," and the legislature of 1892-1893 redeemed the pledge. Framed with consummate partisanship, the new elections law helped reduce the electorate in Alabama by 12-15 per cent and paved the way for constitutional disfranchisement.\(^9\)

The Sayre Law worked against the voting rights of an agricultural, partially illiterate population in several ways. Citizens were required to register in May, one of the busiest months of the year for
farmers. The Registrars, in addition, were to be appointed by the
governor, with discretion to add or delete names from the voting
lists at intervals. Would-be voters had to preserve their registra-
tion certificates until the following August or November, an innovation
which allowed considerable leeway for the loss, seizure or purchase of
certificates from that part of the electorate not accustomed to
preserving documents. During the process of voting, polling officials
were removed from the scrutiny of poll watchers by a statutory minimum
of fifty feet. The new law provided for secret voting—only an
official could help the illiterate voter—and the ballots to be used were
patterned after the Massachusetts "blanket ballot," which listed
candidates alphabetically without party symbols. Taken as a whole,
the Sayre Act is a striking example of the way in which the Australian
ballot was used in the late nineteenth century as an integral tool
of disfranchisement.

The elections law shocked and disheartened reformers and provided
the various anti-Bourbon groups with an enduring reason for close
cooperation. A Greensboro Jeffersonian meeting denounced the
Democratic measure "as the quintessence of all political hypocrisy
and intended fraud." W.H. Skaggs of Talladega, a Silver Democrat who
was in 1893 making the transition to Jeffersonian Democracy, called
the Sayre Law "a better instrument of fraud in elections than the old
law." Nor was the disfranchising intent of the act a secret. As the
Luverne Liberal proclaimed, "Damn a law that would take from an
unfortunate illiterate person his right of franchise." Unembarrassed
with lingering loyalties, the Populists welcomed the measure as a
Democratic declaration of war to the death. The Democratic Selma

Times noted:

It is the Weaverites, . . . the leaders who undertook to carry Democrats away from their party in November . . . who are more bitter and hostile now than then, and to whom harmony would be as poison, clasping the very life blood of their hopes and their ambitions. 13

The conduct of the Democratic legislature outraged Joseph Manning and revived in him a tendency to make hasty predictions. As the pattern of the session unfolded, he gave vent to his anger before a conservative reporter. "In the next election," he threatened, "the stuffed ballot boxes of the Black Belt will be met by equally well-stuffed ballots from the white counties." 14 After he had had time to cool down, Manning stated that the legislature had acted to secure the triumph of "a stupendous partisan machine," and he gave his considered opinion in terms of the democratic ethic of the People's Party movement. The Sayre Law, he said, was "destructive of the principle 'that elections shall be free and suffrage universal,' which is the basic principle of popular government." 15

After the legislature adjourned, Manning began to travel from county to county, determined "to instruct our electors as to the duty of suffrage." 16 Since the Democrats had rendered it difficult to vote, the Evangel reasoned, reformers must redouble their dedication.

The Panic of 1893 was deepening the long-standing agricultural depression just as Joseph took the road, and the manner in which he combined topics of current interest can be judged from the following "Appeal" to the voters of Clay County:
No prosperity, no happiness and no peace. And why? There is no liberty!... Organized Democracy has plucked the possessions from the poor in Alabama. It is now after this last feather—the right to vote!...
Talk about political preference... rather than be as big as a porpoise [sic] and flaunting in a sea of political corruption after the soup that is thrown from a monopolistic administration, I had rather be a peckerwood fluttering for freedom without even a tail-feather.

In 1893 Manning spoke in more counties than ever before, but he did not confine his exertions to the stump. Bereft of his newspaper (the Alabama Reformer having long since failed), he hoped to reach as large an audience as possible through what he jokingly referred to as his "literary career." He labored in his spare time, and by May had produced his first book.

Manning's production was a forty-page pamphlet entitled Politics of Alabama. Though it was "fraternally dedicated" to "the patriotic people of Alabama who demand a free ballot and a fair count," the work was intended mainly for the enlightenment of Jeffersonian Democrats. As such, the book was so complimentary to Kolb, "the grandest commoner of them all," that the ex-Commissioner used it as a campaign document in 1894. In particular, Politics of Alabama contained an open letter written by Kolb to the legislature. This, though it was an excellent account of fraud and corruption in state politics, included Kolb's typical insistence that his supporters were "life-long Democrats," and the reactionary assertion "that Democracy means that the people shall rule, and that white people should govern Alabama."
Manning devoted most of his forty pages, however, to a review of Alabama history designed to wean the Jeffersonians away from their provincial Democracy. Readers of Hinton R. Helper could recognize in the Bourbons of the 1890's, as presented by Manning, "the same extremist element . . . which has more than once ruled more desperately than wisely." Reform was still being blocked and thwarted, he asserted by "the sons of the class of men who fought [i.e., impressed] the poor white man during the late war and spoliqated his meagre possessions, in order that the shackles might be kept on the ankles of the black man." And what reward had the plain people derived from thirty years' service on behalf of the slaveholders and their sons? Joseph answered this question with a statement of principle:

The common people always fight all the battles in time of war, create all the wealth in time of peace; but . . . they have never reaped a substantial benefit from either contest . . . The average Alabamian . . . approaches the verge of eternity able to bequeath a heritage of neither full-fledged liberty nor free-titled land to [his] uneducated, homeless and hopeless children.21

Politics of Alabama goes on to state that the Democratic Party had maintained its control only by playing upon sectional and racial fears, thus building upon "the foundations of bitter prejudice." Ever since Reconstruction days, Manning accurately noted, generations of well-financed "party lash-crackers" had manipulated public opinion in order to bring "every imaginable pressure" upon nonconformists. The most recent oratorical tool of the Bourbons was the "Force Bill Cracker," which had been employed persistently after Frank Saltzall called, in August of 1892, for federal intervention to secure honest elections in Alabama. The Force Bill was dead, of course, but Manning observed
that it lived again in the typically race-baiting speeches of machine politicians:

Democratic campaign[ers] . . . never fail to picture, in their denunciation of this hobgoblin, burly negroes guarding the polls with bayonets while timid white men come trembling forward to deposit their ballots. 22

Like a good Populist, Manning provided his readers with a catechism proving the imminence of Democratic defeat. "The general want has produced general thought," he wrote. "Thought has produced inquiry" and such organizations as the Farmers' Alliance. "Investigation," in turn, "has inaugurated a revolt," with the result that "the rank-and-file of the people in Alabama are in an astounding state of agitation." The product of these "searching currents of thought" was the political phenomenon known as Populism. 23 Manning firmly maintained that the People's Party—not the Jeffersonian Democracy—was a necessary party, because it embodied the fresh ideas and national scope of the Alliance. The further the process of agrarian education spread, he was confident, the more obvious the need for a sophisticated national approach would become. Already "the reading and thinking masses understand" that

The fundamental principles promulgated by Jefferson, and upon which the Democratic Party was organized, have been instilled into the hearts of practically all Americans and no organized political party is necessary to maintain them. 24

Among the principles of Alliance-Populism, Manning was most anxious to teach that of an interracial unity of interest among producers. And in order to turn the Jeffersonians further in the direction of class politics, he presented black farmers in a variety of
of favorable lights. In a sentimental and somewhat patronizing manner, he pictured the slaveholders and their heirs capitalizing politically upon the spectre of Negro rule, meanwhile forgetting "that it was the wrinkled hands of the old colored slave that were stretched out in protection of his master's loved ones" during the Civil War. Repudiating the stereotype which depicted Negroes as demon brutes, Manning insisted:

There is no reasonable ground for fear of 'negro supremacy.' It is the domination of the man with the black heart, without special reference to 'hide,' that the yeomanry of Alabama must really fear.25

The real danger, as all reformers knew, was the supremacy of the Black Belt machines, whose "fraudulent manipulation" of black votes kept the Democratic Party in power. Manning was racist enough to object to this party of "dark complexion" because it thwarted "the will of the white people" of North Alabama, but he steadfastly maintained that black voters were in reality the allies of the "white productive classes":

Be it said to the credit of the 'black belt' negroes, however, [that] they protest they did not vote for Jones, and are amazed that the country has palmed the Democratic Party of Alabama . . . off on them.26

Again and again, Joseph stressed that the battle must be fought against law-breakers and perverters of free institutions, not against their victims. It was a fight, he said, in which the masses of both races must unite against a powerful few. "The revolt of the common people of Alabama against the 'machine bosses' is, simply speaking, a revolution against revolutionists."27

Despite his advocacy of genuine Populism, Manning taught in
Politics of Alabama that ordinary methods of education and agitation could not win the day in Alabama. Anti-Bourbons of all stripes were faced with the necessity of registering and voting under the Sayre Law, which was "nothing less than a legalized plot to commit treason against a republican form of government." All of the "honest men" who hoped to benefit from fair elections, therefore, must unite "whether favoring or opposing the demands of the common people." Nonpartisan cooperation must be the watchword among agrarians, Republicans, and even conscientious Democrats, or the Populist cause would be lost with the rest.

First and foremost, before the strength of any new issues can even be tested in this state, the 'machine bosses' who have reigned supreme in Alabama for the last nineteen years must be dethroned . . . Then, and not until then, will the demands . . . favored by a majority of the people be enacted into law.  

Manning wrote Politics of Alabama with the Jeffersonian Democrats in mind, but he apparently failed to consult the leaders of that party before laying down a strategy of continued fusion among reformers. Kolb and his lieutenants, however, consulted among themselves during the months after the passage of the Sayre Law, and eventually called for a joint meeting of the Jeffersonian and Populist executive committees in Birmingham on May 11. The meeting was expected to publish a "pronunciamento . . . formally announcing the line of battle of Kolb a year hence," but Manning, Gaither, and Philander Morgan were among the few Populists who showed up. And far from participating in "the stump-whooping of the faithful," the People's Party contingent
listened in horror as Jeffersonian chairman A.T. Goodwyn outlined a peace-offer intended for the Democratic organization.\textsuperscript{30}

The Jeffersonian peace plan of May 1893 was similar to the compromise proposed by Kolb's supporters in the Democratic convention of the preceding year. The plan centered on a white primary proposed for April 1894, which would determine Democratic nominees for state offices. The Jeffersonian and "organized" party structures were to remain separate until the primary, but their mutual nominees were to take a healing oath never to impair white suffrage in Alabama. Goodwyn sent these propositions to A.G. Smith, chairman of the Democratic state executive committee, who was given forty days in which to return the answer of his party.\textsuperscript{31}

The foremost authority on Jeffersonian Democracy has called the compromise offer of 1893 a "practical rather than philosophical" tactic, which it probably was.\textsuperscript{32} Goodwyn and his fellow committeemen circulated copies of the proposals throughout the state, carefully deleting a section which limited the Democrats to accepting or rejecting the whole report without change.\textsuperscript{33} Then when the Smith committee refused the plan, Jeffersonian newspapers claimed that "this plutocratic, negro-loving, usurping gang" had turned down an offer made in good faith: "proof that the bosses and ring-leaders of that rotten party don't want any fairness or white supremacy in theirs."\textsuperscript{34}

Certainly, the Jeffersonians hoped to outbid the Democracy as a "white man's party" and thereby eliminate one of the most potent weapons in the Bourbon arsenal. Albert T. Goodwyn played heavily upon this theme, for instance, claiming that his proposals were care-
fully, framed conciliatory, and expressive of the wishes "of the white 
people of the state, yes, the white people only, who have stood shoulder 
to shoulder." As a calculated policy these abortive compromises 
no doubt helped strengthen Kolb's hold upon the ideologically backward 
majority of Jeffersonians, at the cost of damaging the interracial 
coalition promoted by Populist leaders. Nor could there be any question 
as to whether informed Jeffersonians understood the truth about black 
voting preferences in Alabama. Frank Baltzell, writing before the May 11 
conference, said of unsuccessful Democratic efforts to win black 
supporters: "The only reason that they are not hugging him [the Negro] 
to their bosom is because Cuffee refuses the embrace." Moreover, 
the "Jiffs" proved themselves willing to act upon their conviction 
that the important political divisions in Alabama were "entirely between 
the white voters of the state." Blacks were not allowed to vote in the 
primaries called to elect delegates to the Jeffersonian convention of 
1894, and the Troy Jeffersonian (at that time the major Kolbite organ) 
expressed disgust when the organized Democrats failed to proscribe 
blacks in a similar manner.

The Democratic response to the Goodwyn plan was delivered during 
the first week of June. Under the circumstances, it was a realistic 
statement of fact. The Jeffersonian propositions, said Chairman Smith, 
were worded loosely enough to enable thousands of Republicans and 
Populists to vote in the Democratic primaries. Democratic newspapers 
picked up the theme of refusing to "let down the bar" to known 
enemies. Some conservative sheets vowed in addition "never . . . to 
see the colored Democrats . . . deprived of their right to vote in any
In general, the Democrats had come to accept the fact that, Jeffersonian declarations to the contrary, political differences in Alabama had passed the point of compromise. As Editor Isaac Grant of the Clarke County Democrat observed, "When men's views get together they can act together; but as long as radical divisions exist there can be no oneness in reality." Loyal Democrats were naturally reluctant to accept a plan obviously designed for Kolb's benefit. Instead, they accepted the ex-commissioner as "the leader of a party in opposition to the Democracy, whose next fight ... will be the supreme effort of his life." 39

The Populists reacted to Goodwyn's announcement with varying degrees of anger, dismay, and confusion. The first Third Party man to act decisively was J.B. Ware of Birmingham, previously the leader of anti-Lakeview Populists and a bitter enemy of Manning's. Acting on his own authority, Ware released statements calling for a Populist state convention to be held at Calera in Shelby County on July 4. 40 Though several influential leaders of the People's Party--Manning, Whitehead, Longshore, Morgan--favored such a meeting, they were embarrassed by the unequivocal nature of the call, which had stated that the party would nominate a full ticket for 1894. Manning, who was particularly non-plussed, described Ware and his supporters as bolters who now "assume to play their old game of being the People's Party."

Interviewed by Democratic reporters in Birmingham, the Evangel fumed that no convention could be called without the consent of the Populist executive committee, which had not even had a quorum on May 11. Asked directly what he thought of the Jeffersonian peace plan, however,
Manning became quite evasive. Determined not to provoke an irrevocable split between the agrarian parties, he took refuge in a politician's dodge, snapping: "I see nothing objectionable in the white people having fair elections."\textsuperscript{41}

By the end of May, the members of the Populist state committee had decided to honor Ware's call, largely because of a consensus that the success of the Goodwyn plan would be fatal to the People's Party. One of the Shelby County leaders in charge of the arrangements "wanted it understood that his party had nothing to do with the Jeffersonians' proposition to compromise."\textsuperscript{42} But there was considerable dissent over whether the Jeffersonians should be rebuked or enticed. After the Democrats had rejected Goodwyn's offer, the Choctaw Alliance spoke for the majority of Populists determined to treat the Kolbites kindly but firmly:

\begin{quote}
We sincerely hope that the Jeffersonian committee will come down to the plain horse sense view of the matter now . . . You had better, at least those of you who voted for Weaver, drop your Jeffersonian Democracy and join in the People's Party movement.\textsuperscript{43}
\end{quote}

On the other hand, a zealous band of Populists led by J.B. Ware, J.M. Whitehead, and J.E. Golson of Lowndes County wanted to rid the reform movement of Jeffersonian conservatism forever. Golson's Alabama Pioneer advised the leaders of the People's Party: "You cannot afford to carry the Jeffersonian gang . . . You are not after votes now."

The anti-Kolb faction was courting its own gubernatorial candidate, and Golson recommended him to the Calera delegates, with the admonition: "If they are not going to put out a separate ticket with a man like Mr. Philander Morgan at its head, . . . they should support the organized
Manning was the leader of the Populists who desired neither to antagonize the numerically superior Jeffersonians nor to see the People's Party crushed following a reunion of Bourbons and conservative agrarians. It seemed to him that the best way to avoid both eventualities was to involve the leading Jeffersonians in an all-out attack upon the state and national Democracies; the Sayre Law and the onset of the Panic of 1893 made both groups of Bourbons, in Manning's eyes, partners in fraud and indifference. He was able to persuade the mercurial Whitehead, who had been a warm supporter of Kolb's in 1892, that such an indirect approach would be the most effective, and the two men agreed to steer the Calera convention away from nominating a "full state ticket." At the rally on July 4 Manning's strategy of attacking the Democrats was put into effect before enthusiastic crowds. No nominations were made, and despite the absence of reporters from major newspapers, the story circulated that:

Messrs. J.M. Whitehead and J.C. Manning were the orators, and . . . they succeeded in establishing a commodious hades several times larger and hotter than the former one, for the especial use of the Democratic Party.45

Whether because of Manning's diplomacy or not, cheering evidence that the Jeffersonians were again willing to cooperate mounted during July. On the fourth, Goodwyn, Populist M.W. Whatley, and William Denson, a Democratic congressman-turned-reformer, addressed over 2,000 Allianceemen in St. Clair County with strong "Ocala" speeches.46 Soon Populists and Jeffersonians were traveling in company to county Alliance meetings, attacking the Sayre Act and the Cleveland
administration. Some of these gatherings were nothing less than "straightout political rallies of the Third Party," and at one of these held in Geneva County, Kolb was said to have declared himself a Populist. Perhaps the truest indication that a reconciliation had been effected among the various agrarian factions came in the form of an invitation extended by J.E. Colson to Manning, Adams, Goodwyn, and Denson to speak in Lowndes County. Denson, a free silver man par excellence, sent his regrets to the Lowndes Alliancemen in a letter which epitomizes the ideological fluidity of 1893. Sounding for all the world like a Populist, Denson wrote that:

The Silver question is a mere pretext. . . . The real question is the irrepressible conflict between monarchy and democracy, imperialism against free institutions, the privileged classes against the masses.48

Silver may have been a pretext, but from the standpoint of the Populists it seemed to provide an agency for the utter destruction of Democratic credibility. The collapse of overcapitalized railroads and trusts had caused a panic on Wall Street in the spring of 1893, and because of the monetary stringency accompanying these troubles in the nation's financial capital, hundreds of banks were failing in the West and South.49 At a time when any inflationary stopgap would have been helpful, Grover Cleveland surrendered to the pressure of anxious financiers and called (on June 30) a special session of Congress to repeal the Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890. Cleveland thought that by restoring "confidence" in a gold-based currency he could restore business conditions to normal. But as Southern Populists understood,
actions calculated to allay the fears of radical deflationists might not appeal to the starving agricultural masses. The continuation of "agricultural depression and industrial disaster," as Manning called it, had seriously crippled the Democratic Party in the South."50

Southern agrarians were not the only group anxious to capitalize upon the blunders of the Cleveland administration. Indeed, it could be argued that the People's Party would have continued to develop along the lines of the Omaha platform were it not for the dramatic rise of the American Bimetallic League. Organized by Western silvermining interests in 1889, the League greatly expanded its activities once it became apparent that a tide of inflationary sentiment was sweeping the country. As the depression worsened during the spring and summer of 1893, President A.J. Warner of the American Bimetallic League and W.H. "Coin" Harvey, a brilliant pamphleteer, organized conferences and "Silver Clubs" and encouraged the growth of silverite factions within the Democratic and Republican parties.51 In addition, the silver lobby sent feelers into the reform movement.

In the West, where fusion was the norm for political insurgents, the bimetallic movement attracted no less personages than James B. Weaver, Ignatius Donnelly, and the Populist governor of Colorado, David Hanson Waite. Each of these well-known figures played a prominent role in "Coin" Harvey's heavily-publicized Chicago conference of August 1893. Such activities were basically nonpartisan—hundreds of Republicans and Democrats attended the Chicago meeting—but the St. Louis Republic correctly assumed that "the silver question is being used by the Weavers and Waites . . . to excite discontent against
Democracy . . . [and] to get reinforcements for the Third Party. Waite emphatically proclaimed that free silver was an issue capable of cementing the union between West and South, and predicted that a Populist would occupy the White House after 1896. The Coloradan was in touch with a number of Southern leaders, including Manning; Joseph realized that in the mining states, "free coinage of silver was paramount as a political issue." Driven by this impetus, "Bloody Bridles" Waite dominated a series of bimetallic conventions with stirring oratory against Cleveland and Wall Street. "The war has begun," he told an audience in Denver, "the same war which must always be waged against oppression and tyranny, to preserve the liberties of the people."

It was obvious to Manning that bimetallism "was an element of discord within both the old parties." Taking his cue from men who were the national leaders of his party, he hoped to swell the ranks of the reform coalition in Alabama by a pragmatic use of the silver issue. With the Jeffersonians' compromise proposals hanging over him, Joseph wrote to Davis Waite that silver agitation was necessary "before sentiment begins to settle in another direction." The issue seemed to be a perfect conciliator of factional differences as well; Kolb had been appointed a Vice-president of the American Bimetallic League as early as March 1893, and Philander Morgan had served as a member of the League's Alabama State Council. As for J.M. Whitehead, the adamant editor of the Living Truth was not only willing to fight for free silver, but also suggested, at one point, that Populist legislative candidates in 1894 should pledge themselves to the reelection
of John T. Morgan and James Pugh, Alabama's staunchly Democratic, silverite senators. Though Kolb was typically the first Alabamian to investigate the silver expedient, a broad range of agrarians were willing to bow to a perceived necessity in 1893.

Manning's flirtation with free silver, however, was unproductive. In August he attended the Chicago conference with Reuben Kolb, who cut a "conspicuous figure" among the Southern delegates. In October, he accompanied the Jeffersonian W.H. Skaggs to the St. Louis convention of the Pan-American Bimetallic League, a subsidiary ally of the organization headed by A.J. Warner. Joseph must have decided that among the silver men he would keep his fusionist and Populist activities separate—a difficult and frustrating task. At Chicago he listened quietly to the angry debate which followed Ignatius Donnelly's resolution that free silver was the "only remedy" to the depression. At St. Louis he attempted to forestall a similar fight with the plea that such "extraneous matter" as the Omaha platform should have no place among bimetallic demands. If Manning thus placed himself hopelessly beyond the pale of Midroad orthodoxy, he did not preach heretical doctrines for long. He made, in fact, no public mention of his silver activities per se; in November, when he announced an educational campaign and tour in Alabama, he distributed free-silver and Populist literature together with copies of Politics of Alabama. At the same time, he had opened a correspondence with Davis Waite, in which his stated willingness to organize "Silver Leagues" in Alabama was cancelled out by a steadily mounting disillusionment concerning the motives of the great silver lobby.
It is obvious from his correspondence with Waite that Manning had involved himself with the bimetallic cause in the hope that some of the riches of the West might be diverted into the reform fight in Alabama. Southern farmers had no money to spare for contributions, and Manning had been keeping himself in the field with his own money. "My own resources are exhausted," he told Waite, and four months later he repeated the plea to another Populist leader: "Our people here have no funds."

Under the circumstances, he was furious when, in the aftermath of the St. Louis conference, he received a letter from Colonel A.C. Fisk of the Pan-American Bimetallic League, denying his request for funds on the grounds that he was a Southern Populist. The young Alabamian was astonished that important "Republican friends of the silver league," as Fisk put it, should doubt his capacity for nonpartisan cooperation, or that any true Republican could ignore the good to come to his party from a successful application of the Lakeview strategy. "Every . . . Republican in Alabama," Manning wrote, "is acting with the Populists on the grounds that we will assure to them . . . a free ballot and a fair count when we get in control." After comparing notes with his "patriotic" acquaintance W.H. Skaggs, who was a banker, Manning concluded that the St. Louis conference had been "managed solely for the benefit of booming a few individual interests." He wanted nothing more to do with the Pan-American League, and he asked Waite to convey his disgust to "these free coinage men [just] as it is."

In the same group of letters, Manning addressed a problem more serious than that of personal bankruptcy, namely, the threat posed by
the silver movement to the very existence of the People's Party.

He had heard that a Kansas Populist, W.F. Rightmire, was attempting to organize a single-issue party on behalf of the bimetallic lobby. He had heard that a Kansas Populist, W.F. Rightmire, was attempting to organize a single-issue party on behalf of the bimetallic lobby.63

Joseph, to be sure, was too young to be an "old-time Alliancean," and as such had been willing to take liberties with the greenback principles of the Omaha platform. He had experienced, on the other hand, the movement culture of Georgia Populism, and he believed that any attempt to reduce the People's Party to the level of a special-interest group would pervert the "eternal principles" of the organization and "destroy whatever of progress we have made in the South . . . as a reform movement."64 Whatever his ideological vagaries, Manning's own "eternal principles" were founded upon the faith that human beings were good enough to think for themselves. And, in a South ruled by oligarchies and the cotton lien, his warm devotion to the ideal of equality inspired a clarion called for solidarity against the old order:

Members of the People's Party should at all times be ready and willing to give a reason for the faith that is in them . . . Such a principle is the sovereignty of the people, that the people should be absolute rulers of their own destinies . . . We have made certain legislative demands . . . but these demands are only detail, and do not constitute the basic principle upon which our party is founded.65

Free silver was still a promising issue, he thought, but he was determined to return to the fold of a truer Populism. "I am not willing, as I have lately been educated," he said, "to accommodate certain friends in making certain questions a vital issue for their benefit, when they so ignobly treat our sacrifices."66
Manning attended one last silver convention in mid-December 1893, in Washington, D.C. He traveled north in the company of Kolb and Bowman, who were likewise seeking campaign funds, but this time he fulfilled his pledge of loyalty to the cause of national reform. When A.J. Warner attempted to persuade the Washington conference to declare for a new party, Manning was among the majority of delegates who refused to "put silver above party." Back home, he treated audiences to a spirited denunciation of the single-issue silver men:

This talk about a new party is all bosh. What those who talk about a new party really need is a new backbone. The people do not care about the name, [but] they now want the substance . . . If we need anything it is a people's party—a party of and for the people.68

With the new year, Manning ended his experimentation with bimetallic panaceas. Henceforth he would operate with the national Straightrouts upon strictly party matters, though his real attention remained focused upon Alabama. On all fronts, he was prepared to labor patiently for a Populist victory. "We cannot afford to listen to every scheme or issue now," he told Davia Waite. "We cannot expect to have a political millennium [sic] in a day."69

While Joseph was completing his "education" in Chicago, St. Louis, and Washington, the vital questions of Alabama politics remained the same: Could a majority of the people break free of Democracy? Were honest elections possible in Alabama? Early in September the Jeffersonian executive committee offered a revealing comment upon these matters in the form of a second Goodwyn plan, different from the first only in its safeguards against Republican infiltration of the proposed
Joint primary. The offer was widely treated as insincere, and the Smith committee waited more than a month before firmly turning it down.70 Populists, meanwhile, were more angry that the Goodwyn propositions had been renewed than relieved at their ultimate rejection. The Bulter Choctaw Alliance, for example, still supported Kolb but believed that there were limits beyond which Populists could not go. "We do not believe," said the Alliance, that that the Populists of South Alabama "would have joined in with the Jeffersonians even if the agonized [i.e., Organized Democrats] had accepted" the Goodwyn plan. "We in Choctaw are not Democrats."71 The Greenville Living Truth gave the Kolbites a stern and somewhat patronizing lecture:

Now we hope this 'git together' foolishness is all ended. The Jeffersonians ought to disband and come into the People's Party where they properly belong. If they can't do this they ought to go into organized Democracy. There is no longer any room in this state for a second fiddle faction party.72

Editor Whitehead, however, was willing to do more than chide the Jeffersonians. At a conference in Birmingham called for the purpose of coordinating the upcoming Populist and Jeffersonian state conventions (both subsequently scheduled for February 8, 1894), Whitehead bluntly declared that he could not support Kolb again.73 Instead, the fiery one-legged radical staged his own Birmingham conference where, together with J.B. Ware, Philander Morgan, and other anti-Kolb men, he considered the best means "to prevent Manning and Chairman Gaither from delivering the People's Party over to Kolb." The obvious solution was to put out a straight Populist ticket; again Philander Morgan was discussed as a likely candidate. Morgan though, could not decide whether he wanted the honor at the cost of being branded a "bolter" from the majority faction of the
People's Party. Soon, Whitehead was denying reports that he wanted to be governor, and vowing to stand firm against fusion despite abundant evidence that he was in the minority. 74

The majority of Populists accepted the leadership of such figures as B. W. Groce, state president of the Alliance, who maintained that Alabama agrarians were fighting for common goals, which he described as "purity of the ballot box, retrenchment, ... and personal liberty." In order to speed the accomplishment of these ends, Groce advised delegates to the approaching Populist convention to nominate Kolb "by acclamation." 75 Another reformer who opposed the Whitehead group was W. Gilbert Johnson of Dallas County, soon to be editor of the Selma Alabama Populist. Describing himself as "a straight People's Party man" who would never "dodge the devil around the stump," Johnson criticized both Kolb and Whitehead for launching impractical schemes. Reminding the latter of his warm support for Kolb in 1892, Johnson urged toleration for the authors of the defunct Goodwyn plans: "If Captain Kolb believes that there are still men in Alabama who are as ignorant as the editor of the Living Truth and I were twelve months ago," said the Dallas Countian, then "he is not to be condemned for doing anything that [he thought] would add strength to our cause." 76

If Groce and Johnson were prepared to interpret the Jeffersonian compromise proposals as part of a strategy designed to undermine the residual loyalty of whites to the Democratic Party, they received important support from Frank Baltzell of the Montgomery Alliance Herald. Lamenting the fact that "a spirit of dogmatism seems to be taking possession of the reform element," the Jeffersonian editor warned
(without apparent irony) that agrarians could not afford to break ranks while "the Mississippi Plan is threatened in this state."

Baltzell conceded that there were important differences between Populists and Jeffersonians which only time could settle. "As a rule," he observed, the Populists "have been studying the situation longer and know it better . . . They have proceeded in the reform cause beyond those who have studied only state affairs." But, insisted Baltzell, it was not fair to demand of members of either party a sacrifice of principle; if Populists objected to the Goodwyn plan, many Jeffersonians objected to the radicalism of the Omaha platform. While candidly acknowledging the provinciality of his fellow Jeffersonians, the combative editor advised the Populists to unite with them in order "to aid in accomplishing the reforms sought and desired" by both.77

Of all the reformers at work to keep the agrarian coalition together, Joseph Manning was the most energetic. After the Democrats rejected the second compromise plan, he announced a campaign of education which, extended and re-extended, took him from the Tennessee Valley to the Gulf.78 He intended his journey to be one of unification, and he made a point of visiting rallies called to select delegates for the Jeffersonian state convention. At one such meeting in Pickens County he "lauded Kolb to the skies," but savagely attacked the Democratic Party and Alabama's leading Democratic silverite, Joseph F. Johnston. In addition, Manning steered the Pickens rally away from endorsing the Goodwyn plan, as other Jeffersonian gatherings were doing, and after "one of the most disgusting and contemptible speeches ever made in this country . . . was cheered to the echo."79
Joseph was most anxious to visit Populist centers, too, particularly such anti-Kolb strongholds as Lowndes, Tuscaloosa, and Butler counties. That he was to some degree successful as a conciliator can be seen by the fact that at Greenville, he was given a complimentary introduction by Whitehead. Instead of preaching free silver during his tour (as he had promised Davis Waite), Manning denounced Cleveland's financial policy as the typically callous stance of an oligarch, proof that financial and political institutions were connected at all levels of society. In a letter addressed to reformers in Choctaw County, Manning's class interpretation and agrarian bias show through:

Are you a farmer? Then, you lean on ... your old plowstock from morn 'til night. What do you do this for? To raise cotton, you reply? Who gets the cotton? The merchant. He ships it to the broker, [who] ships it to the mill. Farmer, you toil and raise cotton to make shirts, but the slick-bosomed shirts are worn by the slick citizen who does not toil.

But, he said, just as there was no prosperity, so there could be no liberty until American society was changed. The first requisite for real change, he reminded the Choctaw Populists, was a permanent and yet-unachieved solidarity among the producing classes. Unity was more powerful than wealth, he thought, and backed up his opinion with a parable:

Farmers, think more! The busy plow-stock is a good thing. But it would be better to have liberty and no plowstock, than to have a busy plowstock, and no liberty. Your colonial forefathers had no improved plowstocks, nor had they liberty. But they quit up-turning mother earth with what implements they did have, until 3,000,000 home-spun clad farmers had up-turned the despotism of a heartless king and established a republic. Then they soon had plowstocks and liberty too, in the same family.
Like most agrarian leaders, Manning had written a letter to Frank Biltzell's *Alliance Herald* explaining his position on the candidacy of Reuben Kolb. Indeed, his idealism and forward-looking words on the stump contrasted sharply with a question he posed in this letter: "What sense, then, in sticking in the mud just to keep 'in the middle of the road'?" Yet in terms of devotion to the Omaha demands, there was little difference between Manning and Whitehead. The latter saw Kolb as a traitor, while Manning was willing to work with Kolb for immediate and pressing reasons; neither was willing to leave the national People's Party. Joseph, however, insisted that the time had come when idealists must accommodate themselves to the force of circumstances. "If Populists in Alabama are Populists from principle," he said

May I ask what greater principle is at issue in our state today than this: whether or not we shall have the right to express our free will at the ballot box? In contemplation of this vital question, all others are insignificant.83

He was willing to support Reuben Kolb because the gubernatorial contest of 1894 was "not a national political fight." Therefore, a coalition of reform parties would not be so vulnerable as in 1892, and all honorable men could "raise the glorious banner of patriotism." Manning was careful to assert that he was no "man-worshipper." He admired Kolb for "the good that he has done," the abuse that he had suffered, and the influence that he wielded.84 When his overall performance is assessed, in fact, it is apparent that the young Populist leader rested his case upon the Lakeview strategy of Populistic education and fusionist cooperation.

Meanwhile, preparations went forward for the state convention of the People's Party. Gaither, despite the vagueness of his announcement
("if you want to be in the procession, just organize") reported inquiries from forty-one counties. Manning told Davis Waite that the county conventions he had visited were "larger and more enthusiastic than ever," and mentioned that as many Populist spectators as possible were to be brought to Birmingham. But, though the Populist ranks were swelled with recruits, none of them brought any money to the cause. Gaither complained that he had no funds with which to handle an organization as large as the People's Party had become; Manning, desperate for five hundred dollars with which to pay his debts and continue his speaking tour, was reduced to selling copies of Politics of Alabama and peddling Kolb campaign buttons. Yet the Populist leaders looked forward to the elections of 1894 with a certain grim confidence. "We mean business," said Manning. "We are going in to win the fight, and to hold it, if it takes winchesters to do it."

The Populist convention of February 8 promised to be contentious. J.B. Ware had walked out of a caucus the preceding night, after discovering, in the words of his supporter T.N. White, that about ninety per cent of the delegates "favored fusion with the Jeffersonians in the state campaign." Nevertheless, the Populists assembled on the appointed day at 9:00 A.M., three hours before the Jeffersonians were to meet; by noon, more than 1500 spectators added to the confusion. The process of reconciliation, moreover, was made more difficult by the unexpected absence of benign George Gaither, who had avoided taking either side.

A.P. Longshore gave the welcoming address, in which he emphasized the importance of honest elections and urged the delegates to stand by the Jeffersonians. Trouble began, however, when a band of coal miners from
Birmingham rose to ask the convention who was in the "right"—Ware and company, or Longshore and his friends? Ware rose to explain his point of view, but instead found himself answering hostile questions from the floor. Now, for instance, had he dared to give the newspapers an "official" call for the Calera convention of the preceding summer? Ware retorted that, though he had used People's Party letterheads in the premature announcement, he had paid for them. "Gaither and Manning were too contemptible to do that," he said. This statement obviously did little to calm the pro-Kolb men, and a full-scale debate over "credentials" (which might have ended with the expulsion of the Ware faction) was about to begin, when a delegate named McCarty made an impassioned speech for unity. The speech worked, and after McCarty had given his hearers the quaint and somewhat mysterious adjuration to "lay the little tin dipper aside," the meeting proceeded to business with no more unseemly quarreling.

Cheering letters were read from Gaither and from H.E. Taubeneck, national chairman of the People's Party. Then "the thin frame of J.C. Manning ... arose and took the stand." Manning was angry and nervous, but in order to get the convention functioning he was willing to lead cheers, and to make extravagant and probably facetious statements. After denouncing both the old parties, he offered an interpretation of recent silver conventions designed to show that the People's Party would benefit from the bimetallic furor. Next, he predicted that the Populist national ticket of 1896 would be headed by William Stewart of Nevada—and Kolb! Yet he had serious arguments to make as well. He briefly "mentioned the emancipation of the negro from a federal stand-
point," suggesting the national government as an agency through which the black man could be allowed to vote his convictions. From that point, he went on to discuss human dignity as one of the cardinal principles of the Populist movement:

God would not have made our stars and stripes, nor would he have created man, if he had thought organized Democracy was to make us tramps and caricatures of men. Like hired hounds we cling at the feet of plutocracy and Democracy. Shall we do it any longer?

He had carried the convention along with him, and the hall resounded with cries of "No!" And Manning, who had aimed the "hired hounds" remark at his Jeffersonian allies, closed his speech with a shot at the Ware group. "In the language of Patrick Henry," he said, "let us have liberty or death." Then, after a pause, came a devastating specimen of campaign hoopla: "Kolb is our Patrick Henry." No wonder the Eufaula Times and News called the young orator a "serpentine dancer."

It was apparent after Manning's speech that the pro-Kolb faction was in the majority, but Chairman Longshore was careful to appoint such Nidroaders as J.M. Whitehead and H.C. Simoons to the platform and resolutions committees. The result was a platform of surprising ideological purity, a reflection no doubt of Manning's recent disillusionment with the silver cause, as well as the determination of all present to keep the Alabama People's Party in the field. In short, the convention went on record against the demonetization of silver while committing the party to hold fast to Omaha principles. Various planks reviewed the common interests of all producers, demanded a fair vote in 1894, and pledged agrarians to resist efforts to restrict the suffrage. The delegates opposed the emigration of "colored people" to the North
and West, but expressed their willingness to consider a dubious plan whereby land would be set aside in the West for a black state.96 The platform must have satisfied a number of the Ware-Whitehead group, for after its adoption the convention voted unanimously to join the Jeffersonians (who had convened at noon) and assist at the renomination of Reuben Kolb.97

After the Populists filed into the Jeffersonian convention, Albert I. Goodwyn opened the floor for nominations, and Kolb was speedily chosen standard-bearer of the coalition. The Jeffersonians had already put forth a platform demanding fair elections, a contest law, and laws securing fair treatment and better working conditions for miners and other workers.98 The real work had been brought to a conclusion by 3:00 P.M., though a number of important questions remained unanswered. Could, for example, Populists and Jeffersonians work effectively together after the troubles of the preceding year? Would the People's Party disintegrate under the strain of factional differences? Could agrarian candidates continue to attract substantial black support?99 The most optimistic answer was Manning's prediction of victory in 1894, which swept across lines of party, faction and race: "We are one and the same people, and together we will have the same God and whip the world, flesh, and the devil."100

For all his brave words, Manning was deeply dissatisfied with the state of the reform "combination" in Alabama. The immediate cause of his displeasure was the selfishness, as he saw it, of Jeffersonian efforts to establish a stable newspaper. Baltzell's Alliance Herald was deeply
in debt, the Populists had no official organ, and both parties understood the importance of filling the gap. After negotiations with Senator George F. Hoar, a long-time campaigner for civil rights and free government, Kolb had arranged for funds to be raised through the Home Market Club of Massachusetts; the Jeffersonians had meanwhile courted their Republican benefactors with an ambiguously worded pro-tariff plank. The transaction touched off a furor of sensational journalism, in which the Montgomery Advertiser claimed that the bloody-minded Yankee protectionists had furnished the Kolbites with $50,000 or even $150,000 for revolutionary purposes. Jeffersonian editors responded boldly that Republican money was as good as any in a just fight, but no reformist writer could match Frank B Altzell's furious vehemence:

Oh no! Mr. Advertiser, you frighten nobody . . . by your racket about Kolb's hobnobbing with Republicans, . . . just so there is no hobnobbing with the Democratic gang that has so mercilessly despoiled this country . . . As the tool of this gang of licensed robbers, you may rail and rear and paw up the earth, but you deceive nobody.

Unfortunately, there was too much hobnobbing of the latter kind by "the Genial Reuben" and his lieutenants to suit either Altzell or Manning. It soon developed that the expected Northern money would be insufficient to finance a newspaper or otherwise assure Kolb a solvent campaign. Consequently, leading agrarians agreed to support a joint-stock corporation for the purpose of establishing a metropolitan daily. It was expected, moreover, that the more numerous Jeffersonians would purchase the greater share of the stock. The trouble was that Kolb consulted such business-minded supporters as W.H. Skaggs concerning the prospective newspaper, and bypassed the advice of more radical Jeffersonians. Skaggs and a number of the businessmen whom he boasted of having
enlisted in the reform cause were basically Democrats, men who would have remained "loyal" were it not for their conscientious desire to work for free elections. A striking example of this proto-Progressive type is John W. DuBose, a life-long Democrat who emerged as the editor of Kolb's official organ, the Birmingham People's Tribune, when it finally appeared in the fall of 1894. These strange maneuvers, which pointed toward the ultimate reconciliation of conservative Jeffersonians and Silver Democrats, had the effect of leaving Frank Baltzell "high and dry" without a newspaper. To Manning it seemed that there were altogether too many "Jeffersonians of the South Carolina Tillman type, who are now talking of a reformed Democracy in Alabama." He was certain that they were "talking through their hats."

Manning had been incensed to learn that these Jeffersonian leaders, apparently including Kolb, planned to give him no consideration with regard to the new reformist sheet because he had no funds. Unable to subsist upon the sale of his book, the Evangel appealed to his contacts on the Populist national committee. Herman Taubeneck promised to "do all that is possible" to raise money, despite the "terrible mess" of factionalism which had prevailed in Alabama. Ignatius Donnelly, however, offered the beleaguered leader of "this poor man's struggle in Alabama" more than vague promises; the Minnesotan evidently arranged for Manning to receive part of the five hundred dollars necessary for the purchase of an editorial post. Donnelly's generosity led to the exchange of several letters, in which Manning detailed the conditions under which he could "sustain my position and command the Jeffersonians, . . . some of [whom]," he noted, "have no sympathy with the People's Party as a national movement." Joseph was scarcely modest in adversity:
Here is the rub. If these folks find that I am able to wage an active Populist campaign, then they, knowing my influence and political power, will give me consideration. In fact, I can dictate some terms. The opinion now prevalent . . . is that I will not be able to fight with old-time activity.

Meanwhile, the Jeffersonian machinations had helped to unite the two Populist factions. J.M. Whitehead continued to denounce Kolb, but after a meeting of the Populist executive committee in Birmingham on April 10, the Greenville Midroader announced that he could support the rest of the fusion ticket. In all probability, Whitehead's willingness to compromise was the result of the formation of a Populist Central Committee chaired by Joseph Manning and A.P. Longshore. Theoretically this committee was to share direction of Kolb's campaign with a similar body chaired by Skaggs, but Manning had suggested an alternative function:

> While the People's Party will cooperate with the Jeffersonians, still we will . . . conduct our own organization and campaign. We will do this in order to avoid being considered a faction or tail to the kite of the Jeffersonians. In carrying our part of the fight independently we will be able to force the People's Party sentiment and identity to the front.\(^{111}\)

Though the People's Party was again blessed with "that harmony . . . which means a solid front," it was still hampered by a shortage of funds. Manning, likewise, had found no substitute for the Lakeview strategy, nor could he have helped but reflect that his efforts since the November, 1892, election had been generally unsuccessful. And, as his political position was threatened by Jeffersonian hostility, he reflected that he was the only Populist leader in Alabama operating apart from a reliable base of support. Gaither, Whitehead, Morgan, and Longshore each derived his independence from the soil. But while in Birmingham, his current base, Manning was at the mercy of a thriving
Jeffersonian organization led by Jerry Fountain and P.G. Bowman, not to mention the Populist supporters of J.B. Ware. In April and May, state Populists were slated to choose legislative candidates, and at this time, Joseph made a decision which he had been turning over in his mind. He decided to return to Clay County—and what followed was one of the classic legislative races in Alabama history. 112
Footnotes to Chapter IV

1. Troy Jeffersonian, December 8, 1893, and Montgomery Advertiser, December 22, 1893. During the period under discussion, the entire People's Party was known as the "Straightout" or "Midroad" faction of the reform movement in Alabama. Though the Ware-Whitehead group was unwilling to compromise with Reuben Kolb, their ideological differences with the majority of Alabama Populists were small.

2. The growth of the People's Party was steady. As early as the August 1892, election, according to one North Alabamian, hundreds of Jeffersonians had cut their last ties with orthodox Democracy, saying: "We have tried both of the old parties, [but] neither has offered any relief to the people, and the time has come when something else must be tried." See E.H. Foster to Joseph Wheeler, October 4, 1892, in the Wheeler Papers.

3. J.C. Manning to Davis Waite, November 28, 1893, in the Waite Papers.

4. Chappell Cory to Robert McKee, June 18, 1893, in the McKee Papers, the Selma Times, quoted in the Birmingham Age-Herald, May 4, 1893, the Grove Hill Clarke County Democrat, August 21, 31, 1893, and the Montgomery Advertiser, July 15, November 30, 1893.

5. Robert McKee to W.H. Skaggs, December 29, 1893, in the McKee Papers, and J.C. Manning to the Montgomery Alliance Herald, November 24, 1893. Note also the Birmingham Age-Herald, March 3, 1893, quoted in Manning, Politics of Alabama, 16: "The Populists will fight the Democratic Party in 1894 on the issue of the last August election."

6. Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, December 22, 1892, January 12, 26, 1893, the Montgomery Alliance Herald, quoted in Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 237, and Robert McKee to H.A. Herbert, September 20, 1893, in the McKee Papers.


9. Kousser, Shaping of Southern Politics, 55-56. In 1892, according to Kousser's figures, 64 per cent of the black and 80 per cent of the white voters participated. By 1896 the figures had fallen to 49 and 68 per cent, respectively. See also Malcolm C. McMillan, Constitutional Development in Alabama, 1798-1901: A Study in Politics, the Negro, and Sectionalism (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1955), 224-225.

10. Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 239-240. For information on the "blanket ballot," see the Grove Hill Clarke County Democrat, March 23, 1893, quoting the Savannah, Georgia, News.


12. Luverne Liberal, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, August 18, 1893. Luverne was the county seat of Crenshaw County, described by Harry E. Rogers (relative of A.H. Rogers, Crenshaw Alliance organizer) to the author as a "nest" of Jeffersonians and Populists.


17. Ashland People's Party Advocate, February 9, 1894. This speech has been chosen as typical of Manning's efforts.


19. Montgomery Advertiser, January 8, 1894.

20. Manning, Politics of Alabama, 8-11, 15-16. Note that when Manning quotes Kolb's letter in a later chapter (ibid., 40), he omits all mention of white supremacy.

21. Ibid., 22-23. Thomas Jones, W.C. Oates, Senator John T. Morgan and H.A. Herbert, Cleveland's Secretary of the Navy, were all ex-Confederates of high rank.

22. Ibid., 18-19, 21. There can be little doubt that from 1892-1896, most of the Populists, Jeffersonians, and Republicans in Alabama favored a congressional investigation of state election procedures. They
were certain that, following a thorough investigation, the Congress would enact legislation to prevent future Democratic frauds. Thus, two years after the failure of the Lodge Hill, there was a strong body of support in at least one Southern state for a federal elections law.

23. Ibid., 24-25. Note also the title of Manning's last chapter: "The Success of Populism Assured."


26. Ibid.

27. Ibid., 26.

28. Ibid., 33, 39-40.


31. Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 241. The Jeffersonians insisted upon representation at the polls in the projected primary, which was to be conducted under pre-Sayre Law rules.

32. Ibid. The whole "compromise plan" controversy was to some degree a contest of hypocrisy between the Democrats and the Jeffersonians. The former, especially, maintained that Kolb's unreasonable behavior in fusing with Populists and Republicans absolved the legislative majority from rectifying the frauds of 1892. See R.N. Murphy to Thomas Jones, September 29, 1892, in the Jones Papers, Robert McKee to James E. Cobb, March 26, 1893, and Robert McKee to W.H. Skaggs, March 29, 1894, in the McKee Papers.

33. Grove Hill Clarke County Democrat, July 13, 1893.

34. Boaz Sand Mountain Signal, October 27, 1893, and the Butler Choctaw County Alliance, June 14, 1893.


37. Troy Jeffersonian, December 1, 8, 1893, March 2, 1894. Various Jeffersonian county organizations may have allowed blacks to vote.


40. Birmingham Age-Herald, May 17, 1893.

41. Prattville Progress, May 19, June 9, 1893, the Montgomery Advertiser, May 17, 1893, and the Birmingham Age-Herald, May 17, 1893. Accounts published in Birmingham and Montgomery contain numerous differences of wording. Apparently, Manning gave the interview to a knot of reporters on the streets of Birmingham, but some of his comments (as reported) are highly suspicious. For one thing, the articles have him refer to a nonexistent Age-Herald article concerning the Calera convention. He is made to denounce the convention, too, whereas in reality he was determined to play a prominent role in any such meeting. Most suspect of all, the Advertiser article has him state: "I am not opposed to unity, and hope the time will come when the best element of our people will get together and rule our state affairs." The "best element" language was straight from the state Democratic platform of 1892.

42. Prattville Progress, June 9, 1893.

43. Butler Choctaw Alliance, June 21, 1893.

44. Ft. Deposit Alabama Pioneer, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, July 6, 1893, and in the Anniston Weekly Times, July 6, 1893.

45. Prattville Progress, May 19, 1893, and Columbiana Shelby Chronicle quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, July 8, 1893.

46. Montgomery Advertiser, July 6, 1893.

47. Ibid., July 13, 14, August 3, 1893.

48. Ibid., July 15, 30, 1893. Benson never formally aligned himself with the Jeffersonians, and his position was therefore awkward. All he got for "toting his own skillet" was a certain amount of campaign money from H.E. Taubeneck and a sound beating at the hands of radical Populist M.W. Howard in the seventh district congressional race of 1894. See David Harris, "The Political Career of Milford W. Howard, Populist Congressman from Alabama," (unpublished master's thesis, Alabama Polytechnic Institute, 1957), 37-39.

49. For a description of agricultural distress, see Henry Bethea to John W. DuBose, March 25, 1893, in the DuBose Papers. See also the Montgomery Advertiser, July 18, August 17, 1893, and for a general discussion of the Panic of 1893 and its effect on the South, see Woodward, Origins of the New South, 264-272.
50. In Alabama, the Montgomery Advertiser, Mobile Register, Dadeville Herald and other goldbug sheets found themselves fighting against popular opinion as voiced by senators John T. Morgan and James Pugh, and J.F. Johnston, Birmingham banker and gubernatorial candidate. By 1895, Johnston controlled a regular Silver-Democratic press. See the Montgomery Advertiser, November 3, 1893, and Josephson, The Politico, 530-532.

51. Goodwyn, Democratic Promise, 389-391, 440-441. Piat money continued to be discussed in Alabama, as a letter from J.R. Dowdell to Thomas Jones, August 4, 1893, in the Jones Papers, makes clear: "The general cry is the country needs relief and must have it... [But] neither gold nor silver, nor both, alone will answer the requirements of this great country for a circulating medium."

52. St. Louis Republic, quoted in the Grove Hill Clarke County Democrat, August 17, 1893. Weaver was preparing to run for Congress in a district which made fusion with Silver Democrats a necessity. Donnelly was seeking for the means with which to regroup his Minnesota Party, badly defeated in 1892. Waite, as governor of a silver mining state, was tied to the bimetallic movement.

53. Manning, Fadeout, 8, 5-15.

54. Montgomery Advertiser, July 13, 1893.

55. J.C. Manning to Davis Waite, November 10, 1893, in the Waite Papers.


57. W. Gilbert Johnson to the Montgomery Alliance Herald, December 7, 1893. Johnson quoted Whitehead: "The Living Truth says that if we will put a straight-out People's Party ticket in the field, instructing legislative candidates for Morgan and Pugh, it would put the anti-Cleveland forces and the Populists very close together." See also the Greenville Living Truth, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, November 3, 1893.

58. Montgomery Advertiser, August 2, 3, October 6, 1893, the Grove Hill Clarke County Democrat, August 3, 1893, and Goodwyn, Democratic Promise, 441-442, 676, n. 10. In 1893-1894, reform leaders in Alabama were introduced to the talented and complex William H. Skaggs of Talladega. A free silverite and conservative Jeffersonian, Skaggs was a late-comer to reform who became one of the leading strategists of the anti-Democratic coalition. After the collapse of Populism, he migrated to Chicago and became a socialist. See Owen, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, IV, 1566.
59. Montgomery Alliance Herald, November 11, 1893, and J.C. Manning to Davis Waite, November 10, 1893, in the Waite Papers.

60. J.C. Manning to Davis Waite, November 28, 1893, in the Waite Papers, and J.C. Manning to Ignatius Donnelly, March 7, 1894, in the Ignatius Donnelly Papers, Minnesota Historical Society.

61. J.C. Manning to Davis Waite, November 28, December 1, 1893, in the Waite Papers. Manning suspected William Stewart of Nevada and Governor Pennoyer of Oregon, prominent Silver Republicans, of taking Fisk's side.

62. J.C. Manning to Davis Waite, December 1, 1893, in the Waite Papers, and Owen, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, IV, 1566.


64. J.C. Manning to Davis Waite, December 1, 1893, in the Waite Papers.

65. Ibid., and the Ashland People's Party Advocate, March 2, 1894.

66. J.C. Manning to Davis Waite, December 1, 1893, in the Waite Papers.

67. Montgomery Advertiser, December 20, 1893, February 9, 1892, and the Troy Jeffersonian, January 5, 1894, quoting the Montgomery Journal. An article in the Chattanooga Times, quoted in the Butler Choctaw Alliance, January 17, 1894, claimed that Kolb and Bowman had arranged for $150,000 from the silver lobby.

68. Butler Choctaw Alliance, January 24, 1894.

69. J.C. Manning to Davis Waite, December 1, 1893, in the Waite Papers.

70. Montgomery Advertiser, September 8, 1893, the Montgomery Alliance Herald, quoted in the Eufaula Times and News, September 28, 1893.

71. Butler Choctaw Alliance, October 18, 25, 1893.

72. Greenville Living Truth, quoted in the Prattville Progress, November 3, 1893.

73. Grove Hill Clarke County Democrat, November 30, 1893. The conference met on November 16, 1893, and decided that the Populists and Jeffersonians would have separate conventions on the same day in Birmingham. The Jeffersonians engaged Birmingham's mammoth convention hall, the "Winnie Davis Wigwam"; the Populists rented nearby Sublet Hall.

75. Troy Jeffersonian, December 8, 1893. Groce mentioned retrenchment because Thomas Jones' annual message of 1892 had revealed that the state government was in deep financial trouble. Jones borrowed money in 1892 and again in 1894, and agrarians naturally assumed that the state was unable to pay its debts because of official corruption. See the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, December 8, 1892, quoting the Birmingham Age-Herald, and below.

76. W. Gilbert Johnson to the Montgomery Alliance Herald, December 7, 1893, and the Troy Jeffersonian, March 16, 1894. Johnson was Manning's ally, and an influential Black Belt reformer. He erred in asserting that Whitehead had been in any sense a Democrat in 1892.

77. Montgomery Alliance Herald, November 11, 24, 1893. Baltzell was able to approach factional differences with a sense of complexity since, like Samuel Adams, he was a real financial radical and an exception to the Jeffersonian rule. In general, he treated the second Goodwyn plan offer as a tactical maneuver.

78. Ibid., November 11, December 7, 1893, and the Butler Choctaw Alliance, November 15, 1893. Manning had originally planned to tour between November 15 and December 20, but he continued to visit Populist and Jeffersonian county conventions until the end of January, one of his last stops being in Clay County. See attached Map #8.

79. Montgomery Advertiser, January 11, 1894. See also Ibid., January 2, 21, 30, 1894.

80. Butler Choctaw Herald, January 4, 1894. In Greenville Manning encountered what may have been an example of black hostility to all white reformers in the wake of the Goodwyn compromise offers. At one point in his speech he addressed a group of about twenty blacks: "They said you voted that [Democratic] ticket—did you do it?" He was taken aback when several of them shouted back "Yes!" Manning looked intently at them, and stated "emphatically": "You didn't do it."

81. Butler Choctaw Alliance, March 7, 1894. Manning particularly objected to Cleveland's selling bonds to such Wall Street financiers as J.P. Morgan in order to keep the gold reserve in the federal treasury at an "acceptable" level. This, he said, was no better than selling the country into "bonded slavery." See the Ashland People's Party Advocate, July 6, 1894.

82. Butler Choctaw Alliance, March 7, 1894.
83. J.C. Manning to the Montgomery Alliance Herald, November 24, 1893.

84. Ibid. Manning praised Kolb, it seems, partly in order to condemn his enemy J.B. Ware. After noting that "only a fool, or a traitor would clog the movement for free rights," he compared Kolb with stay-at-home reformers—Ware, evidently, was seldom far from Birmingham: "There are some who have never been abused, of course. There are some who haven't been worth—either!"

85. Montgomery Alliance Herald, November 11, 1893. About ten additional counties had acquired Populist organizations, among them Marengo, Mobile, and Russell counties. See the Troy Jeffersonian, February 18, 1894. On the journalistic front J.M.K. Guinn, ex-editor of the Oxford Voice, founded the Randolph Toiler in Randolph County, and in 1894 a Knights of Labor organ, the Clanton Banner, became a Populist sheet under the direction of Chilton Countian T.N. White. See Rogers, One-Called Rebellion, 255, the Ozark Banner, February 2, 1893, and attached Map 9.

86. J.C. Manning to Davis Waite, December 30, 1893, in the Waite Papers. See also W.S. Reese to Joseph Wheeler, January 22, 1894, in the Wheeler Papers.

87. Montgomery Alliance Herald, November 11, 1893, and the Montgomery Advertiser, February 8, 1894.

88. J.C. Manning to Davis Waite, December 30, 1893, in the Waite Papers.

89. Montgomery Advertiser, February 8, 1894, and the Clanton Banner, quoted in the Centre Cherokee Sentinel, February 22, 1894. Gaither could not attend because his daughter was severely ill; see the Troy Jeffersonian, February 18, 1894. Joseph Johnston, Democratic gubernatorial hopeful, claimed to have talked with many Jeffersonians who were afraid not to renominate Kolb, who they feared, would return to the Democracy otherwise. Manning and his allies probably feared that a "Straightout" stand by the Populists would clear the ground for yet another Democratic-Jeffersonian reconciliation. See J.F. Johnston to Joseph Wheeler, January 2, 1894, in the Wheeler Papers.

90. Montgomery Advertiser, February 9, 1894.

91. Ibid.

92. Ibid. Manning had previously denounced Stewart and other silverite Republicans and Democrats to Waite; but the Nevada senator, a nominal Populist, was very popular in Alabama. See the Ozark Banner, March 9, April 20, 1893, and for Manning's opinion of Stewart, see J.C. Manning to Davis Waite, December 1, 1893, in the Waite Papers.
93. Montgomery Advertiser, February 9, 1894.


95. Montgomery Advertiser, February 9, 1894. The platform and resolutions committees were separate.

96. Ibid. Despite its relatively advanced position on racial brotherhood, the People's Party of Alabama found it difficult to escape the racist mentality of the time. The idea of a separate black state (with its implied acceptance of segregation) surfaced regularly during the late nineteenth century. See Gaither, Blacks and the Populist Revolt, 16, 43.

97. Montgomery Advertiser, February 9, 1894. It is not known whether anyone walked out of the Populist convention. Whitehead, certainly, continued his opposition to Kolb. See below.

98. Ibid., and the Union Springs Herald, February 14, 1894. The state was dominated by Jeffersonians, but contained two "Populists" who professed to be members of both parties: Samuel Adams, for Commissioner of Agriculture, and J.P. Oliver of Tallapoosa County, for State Superintendent of Education. See also Rogers, One-Callused Rebellion, 272.

99. Union Springs Herald, February 14, 1894, and the Hayneville Citizen Examiner, February 22, 1894. During the Jeffersonian convention, Skaggs supervised the forcible expulsion of "Black and Tan" leader William Stevens from the hall. Stevens was a known friend of Bourbon gubernatorial candidate William C. Gates, and may have deserved expulsion, but black voters almost certainly took the incident amiss.

100. Butler Choctaw Alliance, February 21, 1894. The Ashland People's Party Advocate, March 2, 1894, noted, "Mr. Manning announced in a great speech that he was ready to carry the banner of the People's Party throughout the commonwealth. 'In the language of the Methodist preacher,' said he, 'I intend to ride the circuit if I have to walk it.'"

101. Montgomery Alliance Herald, November 11, 1893, and Rogers, One-Callused Rebellion, 254. The Alliance Herald was closed for debt in January, 1894, and, though it was revived in April, lasted only a few months.

102. Montgomery Advertiser, February 27, March 25, April 1, 1894. Hoar was a conscientious advocate of civil rights, but as an arche-Republican he took a dim view of agrarian reformers. See Welch, George Frisbie Hoar, 154-158, 180-187.
103. Troy Jeffersonian, March 30, 1894, and the Montgomery Alliance Herald, April 26, 1894. From the context of the rebuttals it is clear that the Northern money, if it was ever delivered, was closer to $5,000.

104. J.C. Manning to Ignatius Donnelly, March 7, March 13, 1894, in the Donnelly Papers.

105. W.H. Skaggs to Robert McKee, November 28, December 21, 1893, February 19, March 9, 1894, in the McKee Papers. Skaggs was assigned to find an editor for the new sheet, and he tried hard to persuade McKee to take the job. McKee was badly in need of work, but could never bring himself to work openly against the Democratic Party.

106. Birmingham People’s Weekly Tribune, November 9, 1894, and Rogers, One-Sallused Rebellion, 286-287.

107. Montgomery Advertiser, August 31, 1894, and J.C. Manning to Ignatius Donnelly, March 19, 1894, in the Donnelly Papers. Baltzell was intermittently ill during 1894, but the Advertiser and the bulk of evidence suggest that he was no longer in Kolb’s favor.

108. J.C. Manning to Ignatius Donnelly, March 7, 12, 13, 1894, and H.E. Taubeneck to Ignatius Donnelly, March 12, 1894, in the Donnelly Papers.


110. Montgomery Advertiser, April 11, 13, 14, 1894. Members of both the Populist factions were probably disgusted by a deal made in April between the Jeffersonians and the Moseley wing of the GOP. Moseley and his Lily-White lieutenants (several of whom were black) agreed to give Kolb their "silent but thorough cooperation," in a scheme by which the fraudulent nature of Black Belt registration lists could readily be exposed: namely, blacks in machine-controlled areas should refuse to register, and swear affidavits to that effect. The plan had the dubious benefit of being a voluntary form of disfranchisement, as opposed to the Goodwyn proposals, and the roughly 60,000 black voters affected were said to have "abstain[ed] from registering with remarkable unanimity." Jeffersonian editors, however, were all too willing to patronize their black allies. Baltzell noted sarcastically: "It will certainly be a novel status for the colored suffrage-slinger [sic] to appear before a judge who has been hallowing white supremacy for twenty years, in order to protest against himself and other colored voters being registered." Such remarks may have contributed to the Populists’ determination to wage an independent campaign. See the Troy Jeffersonian, March 2, 1894, the Eufaula Times and News, April 5, 1894, and the Montgomery Alliance Herald, April 26, May 3, 17, 1894.
111. J.C. Manning to Ignatius Donnelly, March 19, April 7, 1894, in the Donnelly Papers. For the committee membership, see the Butler Choctaw Alliance, April 18, 1894.

112. Ibid., April 18, 1894.
CHAPTER V
A NARROW VICTORY AND A STRATEGIC DEPARTURE

From a Populist standpoint, Clay County politics in 1894 were both challenging and encouraging. Two years earlier, an Infant People's Party led by Omaha convention delegates H.C. Simmons, M.W. Whatley, and E.A. Phillips had narrowly defeated the county machine of Judge Hiram Evans. Now the passage of the Sayre Law rendered the Populist achievement insecure.\(^1\) Both sides began their 1894 campaigning early. At a rally held on January 16 and attended by Joseph Manning and Reuben Kolb, Clay County Populists pledged a massive effort to preserve manhood suffrage, and there were reasons to believe that they might succeed.\(^2\) First, local reformers had inherited from the Farmer's Alliance a strong network of beat level organizers. The very names of these rustic crusaders conjure up an image of grassroots involvement: T.F. Barnhill, J.H. Saxon, W.B. Schoggins.\(^3\) In addition, 1894 saw the birth of an important Populist weekly, the Ashland People's Party Advocate, edited at first by a young man of broad principles named C.F. Dodson. A thorough-going intersectional radical, Dodson gave space in his paper to a host of amateur essayists, nor did he hesitate to write or copy articles praising the Socialist Labor Party of New York, or the Women's Suffrage movement in Colorado. Writing from the heart
of a depressed countryside, Dodson stressed the injustice and contradictions running throughout the fabric of American society. In a manner reminiscent of Henry George's *Progress and Poverty*, for example, he pointed out that American farmers raised:

More cotton, more wheat, more corn, more meat, more wool... than we need in this country, and yet half the people are hungry and in rags. The poor are actually fenced off from the teeming plenty by the monopoly and greed of the savages who hold the money in their power, and all legislation and statesmanship tends to the strengthening of the fence.⁴

To Clay County Populists, Joseph Manning was the man who could turn their hopes of victory into seeming certainty. To the *People's Party Advocate*, he was nothing less than "Clay's nationally renowned champion of Populism"; to J.M.K. Guinn, who edited the Wedowee *Randolph Toiler* in neighboring Randolph County, Manning was "the Tom Watson of Alabama, and you had as well drop the 'boy [orator]' part and make him the state orator."⁵ Joseph was quick to realize the importance of these golden opinions. His beloved "home folks," he told Ignatius Donnelly, would elect him to any office within their power. He knew, also, that Populist legislator R.D. Evans was not going to stand for re-election. With good fortune, Manning speculated, he might be chosen Speaker of the Alabama House of Representatives. Afterwards, he might go to Congress from the fifth district, in which Clay County was located.⁶ By late March, the young Populist had announced his decision to run for the legislature as a resident of Ashland—where his staunchly Democratic older brothers, Robert and Michael, were powers in their own right.⁷
Robert W. Manning, the oldest brother, was a merchant, clerk of the Ashland town council, and Democratic postmaster. Michael N. Manning was the more influential of the two, however, for he edited the Ashland *Clay County Advance* and was the law partner of W.M. Lackey, chairman of the Democratic executive committee. Even more important, Michael Manning had been appointed Clay County Registrar under the Sayre Law by Governor Thomas Jones. Despite their losses in 1892, the "Oligarchy" still aspired to rule Clay County, and Joseph Manning might have been pardoned if he had hesitated before facing such formidable and intimate enemies. It is apparent, though, that his brothers' prominence only spurred Manning on, and it is possible that he viewed the county elections of 1894 partly as a struggle for the vindication of his family name among the common folk. Joseph's father (Henry A. Manning, who died in 1891) had been a kindly and adroit paternalist with a reputation for looking out for his customers. Robert and Michael Manning were self-conscious members of the Bourbon gentry, who took it for granted that they should be deferred to. Joseph later recalled that his father's name and memory were "here and there, wherever I went" during the campaign. Whatever anguish he may have undergone as a result of coolness from family members and former neighbors in Ashland, Manning understood that he would win votes "because of the attitude of these brothers, whose opposition was a help." Behind the unlikely shield of the people's gratitude toward a supply merchant, therefore, a Populist radical began the serious business of winning an election.
In mid-April, Manning stayed for several days in Ashland and renewed personal contact with friends in the county. This allowed him to ascertain the political situation and relax before commencing a nine-county speaking tour, for he had by no means abandoned his campaigns of education. He opened his public bid for the legislative nomination, however, by giving a lengthy interview to editor Dodson of the People's Party Advocate. With dramatic insight, Manning summed up the temper and the dangers of the times:

Revolution seems to be almost upon us ... Confidence is dead. No confidence in the present administration of government. No confidence in the prospect of future betterment ... Coxey's armies, strikes and rebellions are the order of today ... The unemployed have found that they can command consideration by keeping banded together ... If something is not done and done quick, we will have war.11

But just as the old parties seemed thoroughly discredited, the Sayre Law had given Alabama Bourbons even greater power to thwart the will of the people. Never, Manning knew, had the prospects for a Populist majority been so good; never, on the other hand, had the existence of the People's Party movement in Alabama hung so in the balance. C.F. Dodson understood the Evangel's urgency, and noted: "Like John the Baptist he goes forth to cry out to men." In his fight against the authors and administrators of the Sayre Act Joseph was determined to hold nothing back, and he gave fair warning to the "legislative vipers who ... would snatch man from his position a little lower than the angels, and place him just a little above the devil!" As he prepared to send a copy of the interview to the Choctaw Alliance a few days later, Manning's emotion overflowed and he cried out indeed: "It's these bucks I'm hunting! I'm coming after them.12
The problems and pleasures of returning home evidently operated as stimulants, for Manning was at his best during the legislative race of 1894. Reveling in the role of itinerant crusader ("I had rather be called a tramp," he said, "than be a tramp-maker"), he toured the county during the three days before the May 12 primary. As usual, he mingled serious arguments with witty and even devastating epigrams. Faced with the old-time sectionalism of his brother Michael, who had written that "loyalty to the Democratic Party . . . should be a part of the very nature of Southern men," Joseph was anxious to set the record straight. "A yellow dog," he reminded Clay Countians, "gets its eyes open in nine days; some men never! And they remain organized Democrats."13 And though such state issues as Black Belt fraud and the Sayre Law were never absent from the political forum, Manning devoted a good deal of sardonic attention to national politics as practiced by the old parties. Needless of his connections among conservative Jeffersonians and Republicans, he ridiculed the importance of that classic post-bellum bone of contention, the tariff. "The Democrats," he said, "want the schedule raised on this and lowered on that. The Republicans want the schedule raised on that and lowered on this. See the difference?"14 Sometimes, Manning employed his wit on behalf of a long-sought Populist goal, the interracial union of producers. Lampooning the efforts of traditional bosses to buy Negro votes, he read a lesson to the miniscule black population of Clay County and to their white neighbors as well:

The old party politicians tell the colored people to vote the old ticket and then they'll get forty acres of land and a mule. Say, colored friend!
You vote the People's Party ticket and this party will keep the old gang from legislating you out of the land and mule you have got. They are doing up you, and the white men too.\textsuperscript{15}

On May 12 Manning was nominated by a plurality in the Populist primary. His victory was announced without fanfare in the People's Party Advocate, probably because Dodson was fearful of jealousy among local Populist leaders.\textsuperscript{16} For Manning had had two opponents: H.C. Simmons and a relatively unknown Populist named Joshua Franklin. Simmons, for years a moving force in Clay County reform, was at this time undergoing a personal crisis which shortly resulted in his sudden return to the Democracy. Populists charged, and Democrats heatedly denied, that the "Professor" had made the switch in order to secure pardon for a son convicted of grand larceny.\textsuperscript{17} Franklin was an Irish immigrant and successful farmer, talented, literate, and devoted to preserving "Thomas Jefferson's grandest bequest to our country, namely, universal suffrage."\textsuperscript{18} Manning's reputation had overcome both challengers. He was nominated because many in Clay County looked upon his election as necessary for the advancement of Alabama Populism—not, as the Democrats asserted, because his friends had spread rumors to the effect that Simmons and Franklin had dropped out of the race.\textsuperscript{19} It is impossible to tell from either of the county newspapers whether Manning's campaign was to be hampered by bitterness among his allies. In any event, the candidate wrapped up his affairs in Birmingham and soon occupied a room in his mother's house in Ashland.\textsuperscript{20}

Manning's nomination was disturbing to the Democratic bosses of Clay County, who for their part nominated the Reverend Bennett Garrett,
a dignified, full-bearded corn merchant and "Hardshell" (Primitive) Baptist preacher. 21 Garrett was inexperienced politically, but his candidacy was not without advantages for election managers such as W.M. Lackey and Michael Manning. The Reverend Mr. Garrett had no established enemies, and he was willing to run a "front porch" campaign while more skilled hands pulled the wires. Unfortunately for the Democratic cause, the wire-pullers sometimes failed to understand the popular mood. Upon one occasion, Michael Manning admitted in print that Garrett had charged extortionate prices to men who had no credit to buy elsewhere, remarking that those who had fallen into such a condition could expect no better treatment. 22 For the most part, however, editor Manning kept the legislative race out of the Clay County Advance, frequently contenting himself with racist attacks upon an absent Reuben Kolb; "the 'coon' is what he is after," he observed. At other times, Michael Manning contrasted the alleged Republicanism and "protectionism" of the Jeffersonian candidate with the "purity of thought" of Bourbon gubernatorial candidate William C. Oates, "the One-Armed Hero of Henry County." 23 But the Democratic managers did not slight local politics. Joseph Manning, as his enemies well knew, was running against the totality of the Democratic system. Therefore the Bourbon committeemen busied themselves collecting information and inviting prominent speakers in from across the state. 24 W.H. Lackey, M.N. Manning, and their friends were determined to see the system powerfully defended from the stump, and out of this determination came a rip-roaring legislative race.
If the Democrats filled the Clay County Advance with long-liked paens to race and section, Joseph Manning depended on the People's Party Advocate to build up a different kind of solidarity. In C.F. Dodson he found a whole-hearted supporter and friend. By the end of June, Manning was listed as Dodson's "Contributing Editor."

Indeed, through the fall campaigns it is often difficult to tell who wrote a given article, for Manning did not always sign his work. 25 Indeed, through the fall campaigns it is often difficult to tell who wrote a given article, for Manning did not always sign his work. 25

One of the "Boy Orator's" journalistic trademarks, however, was the dramatic and intransigent character of his rhetoric. And for the first and probably last time in his life, he provided crudely vigorous illustrations for several of his written appeals. The combined effect was stirring, as when Clay County Populists read, under an imposing skull-and-crossbones, the following call to arms:

BLACK BELT BOURBONISM
Raised the Ballot-Box Stuffing Black Flag—
And North Alabama Has Written Upon It—
We Demand A
FREE VOTE OR A FREE FIGHT.
They forced the issue; we must meet it.
It is Liberty vs. slavery. 26

Manning's work for the People's Party Advocate was also characterized by a particularly robust style of Alabama Populism. Free for the time being from the task of conciliating the Jeffersonians, he claimed that only a "foolish minority" of would-be reformers were still attempting to preserve their sectional loyalties. In the main, he said, reform talk from such politicians was merely "load-stone [sic] demagoguery" designed to stifle genuine progress. 27 Agrarian solidarity in Clay County was such that Manning's optimism for the movement culture of Populism was refreshed. In an atmosphere of songs, rallies, and hope
rising out of desperation, religious and political faiths merged, and it was possible to believe that human hearts could be transformed. In this millennial vein the Evangel wrote a campaign hymn, "Let There Be Light":

God commanded: 'Let there be light,'
And it pierced the darkness and made the earth bright.
He commanded, again and again,
'Let there be light' in the hearts of men.

Souls have grown dark, black as the night,
The power of evil is subduing the right.
Humanity suffers the rule of the wrong,
God thunders his warning in notes loud and long.

Moving and stirring the hearts of men
They proclaim a new era to be ushered in.
An era when man must stand above gold,
And God above all—the new or the old.

'Let there be light,' hear the command from above:
God is your father, let brotherly love
Suppress evil doings and tramp-making laws,
Let equal rights conquer; may God bless the cause.

As a zealous reformer and realistic politician, Manning was determined to bring his intersectional, biracial perspective to bear on state politics. In this regard, he was most successful in his treatment of Democratic Congressman and gubernatorial nominee W.C. Oates, a fervent supporter of the Cleveland administration. In 1887, Oates had vigorously opposed both the Blair Education Bill and a bill which had increased the funds available to agricultural experiment stations. In 1894, he tried to explain that he had only opposed appropriations designed to benefit "Latin and Greek scholars," but the reform press was skeptical. It was apparent to Manning and Dodson that a generation of Bourbon-controlled education had "stamped upon" white and black citizens an equality of ignorance, and upon their children an in-
equality "compared to the sons of workingmen, North." With considerable
fooling, the editors of the People's Party Advocate noted that Oates
would continue to treat the [white] farmer's son and the negro boy
on the same plan ... in order to limit and restrict both.

In a later article, Manning discussed the further implications of Oates' philosophy. While large numbers of the people remained in ignorance,
he argued, it was easy for the "One-Armed Hero" to "prate about the
rule of the intelligent." And just such reasoning, Manning implied, had
allowed Oates' friend, Grover Cleveland, to "cause panic, play the
anarchist, [and] tear down happy homes" in the name of "sound money."

To Manning, the intellectual kinship of the financial elitist Cleve-
land and the educational elitist Oates was no coincidence. Oates, in
fact, was "one of them," one of a group of politicians and rich men
who seemed to be pursuing a concerted policy:

Do you see the way Oates and autocracy is [sic]
trying to lead the country?
They centralize the wealth.
They centralize the intelligence.
Then, by certain dangerous qualifications, they
centralize the political power into the hands of
a few at the ballot box.

From Montgomery to Washington, among the men who passed the Sayre Law
and those who repealed the Sherman Act, there was evidently similarity
of outlook and ideas. Having made his point, Manning solemnly warned
that concentrations of wealth and power "have ... destroyed the
liberties of the people in every republic that has fallen in the past."

Like C.F. Dodson, Manning wanted to heighten the social and economic
awareness of his readers. He was particularly anxious to explain the
underlying impersonality of capitalism to the tenant farmers of Clay
County, men who were themselves victims of a suffocating paternalism.

For this purpose, Joseph drew a comparison between the chattel slaves of old and the debtors, or "bonded slaves" of the modern North and West. The chattel slave, for all his misfortunes, had been the intimate concern of his master. The law required the slaveowner to feed and house the slave until, as Manning sentimentally put it, "the master laid the old slave to rest." But even the indignities of black slavery, he wrote, were to some degree preferable to the plight of "bonded slaves" caught in the trap of hard times:

Those who are under the curse of the national banking money power are slaving and striving to meet the allotted day's labor, and they have to scramble in the meantime for shelter, raiment and food. The tribute . . . must be paid, or else, turned out of house and home, the bonded slave becomes a tramp.

For all that the worker-victims of the North must tramp the roads while those of the South were chained to sharecropped farms, Manning knew that both groups were troubled by depressed wages and agricultural prices, high interest rates, and loss of self-determination. The People's Party Advocate stated the problem simply: "The contest in this country is between the producers and the accumulators." Both Dodson and Manning believed that the common people of America deserved a birthright of plenty, dignity, and freedom; like the authors of the major agrarian platforms, both men believed that the resources of the nation belonged to the people. Maintaining, therefore the "fundamental principle" that "fraud vitiates contracts," they predicted what would happen to exploitative practices and boss-made laws when the representatives of the people regained power:
If the truth was known . . . most of the class laws now on our statute books were placed there through fraud . . . There is plenty of evidence to show . . . that the legislation secured in favor of the Union Pacific, the Southern Pacific and other railroads was [obtained] through fraud. If the principle of fraud was applied to many of the laws now on the statute books, they would be set aside by the courts and the property restored to the people.35

Fraud, minority rule, monopoly: Manning and Dodson continuously related the issues of Alabama politics to the themes and concepts of a broader world of reform.

Newspaper articles and essays were important, but elections in the nineteenth century were won and lost on the stump. With this fact in mind, both Manning and his Democratic antagonists took steps to insure victory. At intervals during the campaign, Manning invited such prominent agrarians as A.P. Longshore, B.W. Groce, A.T. Goodwyn, and Warren S. Reese in to speak on his behalf. M.W. Whatley, long absent contesting for the fifth district congressional seat, returned in time to give "three grand speeches" for Manning. The Democrats likewise mustered a corps of luminaries from surrounding counties, including (as the Clay County Advance over-optimistically claimed) Senator John T. Morgan.36 The Bourbon leadership from Ashland to Montgomery wanted to see Manning defeated. Democratic strategy, therefore, took the form of an effort to overwhelm the young Populist with prestigious opponents in head-to-head debate. Joseph was quite willing to undertake this arduous challenge, with the result that the first half of July was punctuated with hastily arranged or impromptu confrontations.

Later, the Populist and Democratic committees agreed that fifteen days
(July 18–August 3) should be set aside for more formal debating at specified locations. As intended, Clay Countians flocked by the thousands to witness this continuous spectacle of political discussion. With constitutional disfranchisement and the death of issue-oriented mass politics a mere six years away, most of these voters would never see the like again.

As July wore on, Manning traveled through the heat and dust to debate at crossroads and hamlets with picturesque names: Pole Bridge Church, Delta, Coppermines, Bluff Spring, Wemobulga. He saw little of his nominal opponent. The Reverend Mr. Garrett began avoiding Joseph after one meeting, during which he pleaded with the audience not to humiliate him by sending a beardless youth to Montgomery. Instead they roared with laughter when the "youth" observed: "If whiskers [have] anything seriously to do with it, why not just get a billy goat and let us both slide out of the race?" Manning faced a more formidable opponent in early July: Dr. Wyatt Heflin Blake of Lineville, a retired professor of chemistry and an orator of "literary merit." Blake was an intelligent man, but like a number of Bourbon politicians in 1894, he underestimated the political sophistication of mere farmers. At Fox Creek, the doctor "doted" on the Sayre Law, explaining that the measure had been framed with the loftiest motives. Manning countered with examples of Sayre's fraud-inviting clauses until Blake "could not say it was a fair law." Manning had done his homework in more ways than one, evidently, for he followed up his advantage by quoting a statement of Blake's to the effect that M.W. Whatley had been elected to Congress but could never be seated. When the "literary" man
attempted to deny making the remark, a witness named A.J. Moore was on hand to shame him into silence by saying: "Yes you did say that, Doctor."

Finally, after some scornful allusions to the disgrace attached to supporting a party whose members openly "hope to commit rape on civil liberties," Manning brought the debate to a bruising close. "Dr. Blake," he said, "you have spoken about your forefathers fighting and dying for liberty; it is a pity your sort did not die when they did."

Very shortly the People's Party Advocate boasted that its candidate was "demolishing what is left of the organized Democracy in this county." 41

Though he could scarcely hope to enjoy uniform success, Manning seldom deviated from the platform methods with which he had bested Garrett and Blake. When his Democratic antagonists were through with their appeals to sectional and racial solidarity, Joseph replied with facts. But as he spoke of political corruption and economic disaster, the young reformer was careful to flesh out his arguments with anecdotes and parables. Suiting his voice to the parts, he told of the farmer whose hogs learned not to come to empty feed racks; of the wicked man who set fire to a cat's tail, only to repent when the angry "critter" fled under his highly combustible house. People loved to see Manning down on his knees calling "Kitty, kitty!" with well-feigned fear. Such performances were undignified and physical, perhaps, yet they opened up a liberating form of merriment to the men and women who understood perfectly well whose house was going up in flames. 42 Personally, Manning cared nothing for the formal rules of debate. He wanted to reduce Democratic speakers to "miserable gobs and pieces," and he showed a remarkable talent for turning an audience to his
purpose. "Many who did not vote for me," he later admitted, "fell into
the spirit of the homefolk rooting for me." The greatest and most
grudging compliment, however, came from one of his brothers. Resting
at his mother's house, Joseph overheard a visiting brother lament: "We
thought we had Joe today, but I tell you, it is impossible to beat
him in a joint debate . . . He simply swept that crowd."

Before he was through, Manning had held his own against future
governor William J. Samford of Lee County, Fifth District Congressman
James E. Cobb, and Judge Sayre's law partner, Walter W. Pearson of
Montgomery. At Hollins Crossroads, the young Populist forced the
reluctant Pearson to admit that the Sayre Law was intended "to dis-
franchise a certain class of citizens," thus scoring a victory which
filled the seasoned lawyer with admiration for his opponent.
"Manning's eloquence could thrill the national House or Senate,"
Pearson graciously told C.F. Dodson, adding that he was "sorry [Manning]
was not a Democrat." For over a month Joseph labored mightily on the
stump, while friend and foe marvelled at his "burning logic." He
exhausted himself, though he understood that in Alabama politics, even
oratorical triumphs were not insurance enough. While the debates were
proceeding, in fact, evidence was accumulating that all was not well in
"the free state of Clay."

W.M. Lackey and Michael Manning hoped to sway the populace with
imported speakers and appeals to loyalty, but there were other means
of carrying elections. According to the People's Party Advocate, for
example, Registrar Manning had done his part toward a Democratic
victory by avoiding contact with Populist voters. A subtler tactic employed by the Evangel's brother was the publication, in the Clay County Advance, of stories about the "prominent citizens" (local and state-wide) who had left the People's Party in order to "return to the fold." Reformers treated such accounts as unfounded rumors, though there were enough defections in Clay County to anger Populist leaders. "Lot's [wife] looked back on rotten Sodom and turned into a pillar of salt," wrote editor Dodson, warning: "Don't look back on rotten Democracy, for you might turn to a sack of guano." Many of the defections, predictably, were the result of economic pressures of the sort which had long secured the Bourbon regime. More than ever the biracial lower class of Clay County was at the mercy of Democratic supply merchants, a fact which was sickeningly clear to Dodson and Manning:

[The] parties over the county who are telling their tenants that if they don't vote for Oates, they will be forced to hunt them other staying places, ought to be arrested for intimidating voters. Just such business as the above is being carried on right around this town, and can be proven .... Negroes are being told that if they vote the People's Party ticket, they can hunt other quarters. Shame! Lowdown! Sneaking!

August 6 was an evil day for reformers in Alabama, and the Clay County Populists suffered along with the rest. Democratic horsemen rode in and out of Ashland all day, reporting on the process of collecting votes and carrying messages to election officials in remote beats. The first returns indicated an unusually large vote, but put Manning and the Populist slate ahead by uncomfortably close margins. As the day wore on, nervous agrarians watched Bourbon merchants press
food and promises of increased credit upon the black populations of Ashland and Lineville. Haggard and assailed by doubts, Manning waited out the night in the office of the People's Party Advocate. 50

At 2:00 A.M., the news spread: returns from Hollins Beat made the election secure for Manning, though by the humiliating margin of forty votes, 1183 to 1143. In the gubernatorial race, Reuben Kolb carried the county by a mere thirty-five votes, 1210 to 1175, down nearly two hundred from his previous margin; most of the other reformist candidates won similarly close victories. 51 Manning greeted a crowd of supporters looking, "hacked," and "worse than if he had been defeated." Understandably, the Democrats delighted in his discomfiture, and treated the election news as proof that the People's Party was declining in appeal. Michael Manning exulted: "J.C. Manning, the great national champion of Populist principles, [just] escaped a beating . . . notwithstanding the loud and frequent boasts of his followers that he would sweep the county by 600 majority." What, asked the Democratic editor, would have happened had the Populists nominated an ordinary citizen? 52 C.F. Dodson, for his part, admitted that the reformers had been overconfident, but maintained that "imported speakers, hard political work, use of boodle and desperation brought out the full Democratic vote." In truth, Joseph Manning and his friends should be credited with reversing, locally, a statewide trend of declining voter participation. An inspired campaign drew as many as twenty-six per cent more Clay Countians to the polls than in 1892; three months of strenuous work offset the effects of the Sayre Law and
carried the election. Yet the Clay County leaders could not conceal their disappointment, and as reports came in from the state at large, they reacted with anger and bitterness.

Populists and Jeffersonians all over Alabama shared their outrage. The gubernatorial election of 1892 had been close; in 1894, however, Kolb trailed Oates by approximately twenty-nine thousand votes, 83,292 to 111,875, and the total count was smaller by nearly twenty per cent than that of the previous election. The decline in voting might have been expected since numerous white and black Republicans had worked, according to plan, to persuade the Negroes of the boss-run counties not to register. But the "official" statistics contained the usual extravagant Democratic majorities from the usual Black Belt counties. Reformers were asked to believe that Kolb, who had waged a vigorous campaign, had lost a massive segment of his white support at a time when conscientious moderates like W.H. Skaggs and J.W. DuBose were rallying to his standard. The situation was only worsened by the fact that official statistics gave the agrarians just over forty seats in the legislature, despite persistent claims that, in a fair election, they would have controlled the hundred-member House at least. The ease with which the Democrats had pulled off such a thorough if dubious victory was simultaneously paralyzing and infuriating. Quickly, Manning left Clay County for Birmingham in order to confer with members of the Populist and Jeffersonian campaign committees. Out of those meetings would come a new strategy and a new national scope for the reform movement in Alabama, as well as a changing of the
guard among agrarian leaders. For within the next two months Joseph Manning would emerge as the leader of a movement determined to dissolve the Jeffersonian Democratic Party.

One significant new departure, however, was engineered by the Jeffersonians without Manning's help. As early as 1892, radical Jeffersonian Frank Baltzell had demanded that Congress investigate whether Alabama had "a republican form of government." In May 1894, Baltzell's briefly revived Alliance Herald, anticipating another count-out, declared: "This is not a time to stop at state lines." This reversal of the Jeffersonian principle of states' rights was echoed by the relatively conservative W.H. Skaggs, who in May of 1894 traveled to Washington, D.C., to try to convince "Republicans or Democrats in the North and West . . . [of] the fact that the 'Solid South' can be broken." Faced with another "steal" in Alabama, Kolb and his lieutenants were prepared to invoke the protection of the Federal government while appealing to the self-interest of Northern Republicans. The stage was set, and the only question was whether or not the leaders of the COP would be interested.

On August 10, Senator William E. Chandler of New Hampshire introduced a resolution of inquiry concerning the Alabama elections. Chandler was in touch with Kolb and Baltzell; his resolution, offered during the waning days of a Democratic Congress, marked the first of many losing battles he would fight for Alabama reformers. This New Englander was a complex man and veteran politician known for having persevered in his devotion to civil rights and partisan advantage through every administration from Grant to Cleveland. His talent was probably undiminished in 1894, but he no longer represented the majority
sentiment of his party. After Chandler, George F. Hoar, and other old-line Radicals were outmaneuvered in their attempt to regulate elections in the South through the Lodge, or "Force Bill" of 1890, the subject of ballot rights was dropped by the GOP as a political liability. Chandler and his Alabama contacts realized, however, that the Congress elected in 1894 was bound to be Republican. After Cleveland's blunders had destroyed the Democratic majority in the Senate, they reasoned, it was entirely possible that that august body might be willing to reconsider Chandler's arguments against the legal competency of the Alabama legislature, particularly since that legislature would in all probability, re-elect Senator John T. Morgan, a wily Democrat. In the meantime, the People's Party of Clay County kept the ball rolling by formally petitioning Chandler for the passage of a Federal elections law similar to the Lodge Bill.

The Populist and Jeffersonian leaders assembled in Birmingham could not, however, afford to wait for a Republican Congress. In the first place, confidence in agrarian strength had to be restored before the November 6 congressional elections in Alabama. In addition, prominent agrarian leaders including Kolb and Manning had been goaded by events to the brink of an incendiary lust for violence. Kolb was completely open to the idea of setting up an insurrectionary "de jure" government; at one point the Jeffersonian chief querrated Chandler concerning the likelihood of Federal intervention in such a case. Manning had long since declared that the reform coalition would win the elections of 1894 with "winchesters," if need be. The Evangel and his Clay County forces, moreover, were still seething with resentment over
the frauds they were certain had been committed against them at home. Other agrarians came to Birmingham equally angry, and yet the consensus was that the public temper must be tested before any overt action was taken. Under the direction of Jeffersonian Chairman A.T. Goodwyn, Populist Chairman J.W. Pitts, and W.H. Skaggs, who had managed Kolb’s campaign, an August 9 conference called for a series of mass indignation meetings. Scheduled for August 23 in every county in the state, the meetings were asked to draw up resolutions and organize militant "law and order leagues." Though agrarian leaders counseled against lawlessness, there is no doubt that the leagues could have functioned as a militia, had the people demanded a "de jure" government.

After helping draw up plans for the rallies, Manning left in mid-August for Texas, on a mixture of personal and political business. At some point in 1894, he had proposed marriage to his sweetheart, Zoe Duncan, whose family had migrated from the Clay-Tallapoosa border to Bartlett, Texas, in the late 1880’s. The wedding was set for August 26, a date which Manning must have believed would encompass a dual reformist and romantic happiness. Then, shortly after the August 6 election, he received and accepted an invitation to address the Texas Alliance at Grandview on August 22. It is possible, of course, that the rage and frustration of Alabama politics, combined with nervousness over his approaching marriage may have marred Joseph’s ability to think clearly. But it is certain that he never made a more imprudent speech than this pre-nuptial effort. According to the Galveston News, Manning gave the Alliance men an impassioned review of the fraud situation in Alabama, finally remarking of Reuben Kolb: “We will seat
him if we have to wade in blood . . . " When some level head reminded him that Grover Cleveland might send troops, Manning spat out an almost incomprehensible reply, but in a tone comprehensible to all who heard him: "Cleveland can go to the damn Democratic Party." Catching the quixotic spirit of the speech, excited Texans thronged around the young man, crazily offering to raise 200,000 volunteers to help seat Kolb.67

His Grandview oration, in addition to a few weeks of newly-wed dalliance, cleared Manning's brain of surplus bitterness and allowed him to judge conditions in Alabama more rationally. The meetings of August 23 had been a major disappointment; few counties held public rallies, and fewer "law and order leagues" were formed. On the other hand, it was clear that reformers all over Alabama favored the idea of a congressional investigation. Chandler's resolution was endorsed in Calhoun, Clay, Conecuh, Crenshaw, Elmore, Jefferson, Montgomery, and Pike counties. In Birmingham, W.H. Skaggs claimed to have been contacted by "twenty-five U.S. Senators, who said that if fraud could be proven they would use their efforts to prevent the seating of Senator Morgan."68 For once a majority of agrarians agreed with the sometime firebrand J.M. Whitehead, whose Greenville Living Truth had appealed to county meetings for a non-violent strategy. In the event of armed rebellion, Whitehead urged, the poverty-stricken countryside could never support a Populist army, nor could such troops remain in the field against the forces at the disposal of Thomas Jones and Grover Cleveland. The Greenville radical was anxious to endorse the opinion of such Jeffersonians as Skaggs, Baltzeli, and Goodwyn, who advised Alabamians
to turn their faces toward the North, and a Federal solution. "Our
only hope," he wrote, "is the issue of our cause, and an appeal to
the sober, honest consciousness of the liberty-loving and God-fearing
people of the United States. Sooner or later they will come to our
rescue."69

Such arguments were entirely convincing to Joseph Manning, who,
disturbed by the apparent resignation of the hill country yeomen,
understood that the reform movement must be unified, not divided.
Even before he left Texas, he denied rumors (sparked by his own
earlier ambition but spread by someone at Kolb Headquarters in
Birmingham) that he would run against M.W. Whatley for the fifth
district congressional nomination.70 Already, it seemed to Manning,
the reform forces were approaching the autumn elections in disarray,
a situation in no sense remedied by an August 28 caucus of Populist,
Jeffersonian, and Republican leaders called to discuss the congressional
races. In light of their past services, and the agrarians' dependence
on Northern Republican help, the Moseley or Lily-White wing of the
GOP demanded and was granted the right to nominate candidates for two
North Alabama districts, the fourth and the ninth. Manning was not
present at this Birmingham conference, but he probably approved of its
compromise solution. Not so the Populists of the Fourth, who, led by
Philander Morgan and B.W. Groce, refused to have anything to do with a
Republican candidate.71 Further dissention in Populist ranks was
avoided after the fifth district nominating convention, held in Elmore
County on September 18, chose favorite son Albert T. Goodwyn over
M.W. Whatley despite the efforts of a vociferous and prestigious Clay
County delegation. Whatley graciously joined Manning in offering to tour on behalf of Goodwyn (a promise both men kept), but Whatley's long quest for congressional office was over, and the fact cast a further pall over Clay County Populism. 72

To make matters even more confusing, a long-smouldering division within the Jeffersonian Democracy had begun to blaze over the question of whether or not a "dual" or "de jure" government was still a valid consideration for reform strategists. On August 15, at one of the seemingly endless series of Jeffersonian and Populist executive committee meetings, sentiment was "much divided" over the feasibility of a shadow government. Kolb had been present, and three days later he issued a public letter urging agrarians to form strong local leagues in order to "enforce honest elections now and in the future." Goodwyn had been in the chair at the meeting; a week later he warned the Elmore County indignation rally that they must call upon the federal government as the best alternative to horrible civil strife. 73

Albert T. Goodwyn was in the fall of 1894 a rising politician in Alabama, courageous, conservative, and suspicious of Kolb's long-chvarted ambition. His disagreement with Kolb over the usefulness of real or tactical threats of violence served, moreover, as a catalyst which released pent-up resentments from both the "right" and "left" of Kolb's organization. W.H. Skaggs, for example, was completely opposed to the use of force in settling the election crisis, and the Talladega reformer had long harbored a secret contempt for the founder of his party. As early as March 1894, Skaggs reassured a similarly dubious Robert McKee: "While Captain Kolb [is] unfortunately the
candidate, he [is] a mere incident to the issue." Likewise Frank Baltzell, whose editorials had smacked of incendiaryism in years past, adopted the moderate course proper to the author of the "congressional investigation" strategy. Baltzell was seriously ill during the latter part of 1894, but he must have felt some resentment as he watched J.W. Dubose and Reuben Kolb, Jr., begin publication of the People's Tribune, the newspaper from which he had in effect been excluded.

Kolb himself deepened the growing uneasiness of the reform movement by his persistent willingness to consider violence as a means of obtaining justice. He had pursued the governor's office single-mindedly through three elections, and as the candidate and his fanatical supporters knew, the end was in sight if he were not sworn in on inauguration day, December 1. The printed forms drawn up for the guidance and inspiration of the "law and order leagues" asked for help from those who would refuse to "recognize and sustain" a fraudulent administration, and probably there were in every county men willing to fight. Such farmers and workers were often poverty-stricken, but their determination was anything but pathetic. "Some of them," wrote a correspondent of Governor Jones, "is saving [sic] eggs to sell to seat Kolb." An indeterminate number of these men were contacted in the months following the August election by Grattan B. Crowe of Perry County, an Edinburgh-trained physician and wealthy gin-owner who by his own admission spent the autumn of 1894 raising a "militia" for Kolb. Crowe was an eccentric of violent habits (his 1891 killing of one Ben Glass in the North Alabama mining town of Brierfield was well-known); he was fully capable of leading an insurrection if he could get enough men, and
particularly if the November elections saw the commission of yet more outrageous frauds. With these questions in mind, the Populist and Jeffersonian executive committees announced in October a joint convention to be held in Montgomery on November 12, less than a week after the Federal elections and one day before the legislature was to convene. Both the pacific and the "revolutionary" factions of the agrarian coalition assumed that this convention would decide the nature of the resistance to W.C. Oates' "fraudocrat" regime. Kolb, as was his wont, kept open relations with both groups. It is unlikely that Reuben Kolb ever seriously considered putting himself at the head of an army, yet his newspaper gave publicity to the sentiments of Jeffersonians like J.M. Askew, who told an Elmore County rally of five hundred that "the time for action has come," adding: "We cannot afford to hand down to posterity a heritage of political as well as financial slavery." In early November Kolb announced that he would never again be a candidate for governor, but no one could be sure where he stood in the present contest. As the all-important convention of November 12 drew near, a large number of reformers must have agreed with an astute Talladega woman, who commented that Kolb was the sort of man who "might be led to do certain things . . . which his genuine better feelings would regret."

For Joseph Manning, the summer and fall of 1894 were times of resolution and clarification. After his disillusionment with the silver lobby, he had preached a more nearly Midroad style of Populism. His narrow triumph of the summer had been based upon a class-oriented cam-
paign of agrarian radicalism. Now, ensconced again in Ashland, it seemed to him that only a crusade for Populist solidarity could cure the factionalism which plagued the People's Party. Likewise, he saw the wide Jeffersonian approval of Balzelle's intersectional "Congressional Strategy" as proof that the "Kolbites" were willing to take a more sophisticated view of reform: proof that the Jeffersonians might be brought to see the utility and necessity of joining a broad national organization. The first efforts of Manning and his friend C.F. Dodson, though, were aimed at the Populists of the fourth and fifth districts. From September to November, the People's Party Advocate mounted a campaign of Populist rhetoric which strengthened and reinforced its efforts of the previous summer. "Human rights are vested rights," thundered the Ashland weekly, "in this country of undeveloped resources." "Under a proper distributive system," continued Dodson (or Manning), "no man who works should be poor. Labor produces all wealth. Labor should enjoy what it produces." Central, at all times, to Manning's economic argument was the vision of an informed and aggressive working class:

True Socialism asserts that . . . the world is one great family. 'An injury to one is the concern of all.' The masses begin to 'catch on' and understand this question. What a laborer produces or earns by his labor belongs to him. To take it from him without giving him an equivalent is to rob him.\(^2\)

As he toured central and southeastern Alabama on behalf of A.T. Goodwyn and other congressional candidates—at one point, in Dothan, swapping stump broadsides with W.C. Gates himself—Manning argued that solidarity alone could defeat the Oligarchy, whose "hell-singed fingers . . . grasp[ed] for more gold, gold, gold, while the children of this country were crying for bread, bread, bread."\(^3\)
While he made important use of ideology in his drive for a new agrarian unity, Manning also took advantage of a knowledge of his fellow-reformers and their present temper. He knew that his support of Kolb had alienated J.M. Whitehead, Philander Morgan, and other Populists; with his wide contacts he must have known that a revolt against Kolb was building among Jeffersonian leaders. It is evidence of his maturing political talent that Manning was able to seize upon this opportunity to unite the Populist factions and absorb the Jeffersonian Democracy, and typical that he attempted to do so through a combined appeal to principle and expediency. It is difficult to surmise how much a suppressed resentment of Kolb influenced his decision, but Manning was determined to show that Populist unity was the only alternative left to reformers in the South. By mid-October, therefore, he had published an important article in the Butler Choctaw Alliance, urging the dissolution of the Jeffersonian Democracy and questioning the leadership of the man he had once called "our Patrick Henry."84

Manning opened his public letter by invoking the name of Tom Watson, and praising one of the striking political achievements of 1894—the "wonderful progress" made by the Georgia People's Party in more than doubling its 1892 vote. The reform movement in Georgia was growing, Joseph believed, because of its radicalism. Watson's flamboyant Populism was winning recruits for "the only political party in America that is the avowed friend of the producer and the fearless enemy of the absorber."85 Watson's achievements commanded "favorable comment from the [anti-Bourbon] press in the East," too, an important point for Alabama
reformers who must rely upon the good will of Northern Republicans if W.E. Chandler's resolution were ever to pass. Manning subsequently described these last considerations, stating wryly: "There is something here of practical politics." But at the time he was after more than just political leverage.

During three years of labyrinthine political maneuvers, Joseph Manning proved time and again his devotion to the People's Party. Now, sensing the possibility of a great moral victory growing out of a shattering political defeat, he was betrayed into making statements which a realistic view of politics would not support. Calling, at any rate, for an ideological single-mindedness never present in the agrarian movement in Alabama, Manning speedily laid down the law to the Jeffersonians:

Factions and local contests and organizations soon lose their cast and sentiment. They hurrily [sic] pass away. The People's Party is founded on the lasting rock of substantial justice, and the sooner a contest is made squarely upon its eternal principles, the better for those seeking true reformation. A free ballot and an honest count is demanded, but is it not better to make the next contest on principles?

Joseph understood, from first-hand experience, the value of educational campaigns; now he proposed that the people's Party commit itself to an educational transformation of state politics which would make possible an application for radical economics. "Convert the people to our doctrines," he wrote. Let them see "that the enactment of the principles we advocate into law means relief from oppression, and then they will feel the necessity of throwing [out] fraud in elections."
Focusing again upon the Jeffersonians, the young reformer now closed in for the kill. Demanding that future contests he made "on a higher and broader plane" than previous state campaigns, he blamed Alabama's leading agrarian for past defeats. "We have had enough," he declared, "of Jeffersonian Democracy, Kolbism, and personal and factional" politics. The die was thus cast, and Manning ended his letter with a rousing invitation to unity within the People's Party:

If you are a Populist, don't be ashamed to unfurl its banner [sic] and thank God that you are with the common people. Clear the deck of the 'Conglomeration.' Organize for a straight, bold and fearless 'Georgia Campaign' for the future.88

It is not certain whether Manning mailed additional copies of his article to his friends. Probably he utilized speaking tours for A.T. Goodwyn and fourth district candidate W.C. Robinson to get his message across to the public. Almost certainly he plotted with Goodwyn, Skaggs, and such Straightout friends as M.W. Whatley and J.L. Hosey of Calhoun County, in an effort to control the November 12 convention.89 Taking into consideration his long history of smoothing over differences between the reformist factions in Alabama, the Evangel was probably the only leader capable of uniting Populists and Jeffersonians upon a program of passive resistance to the Bourbons, Federal intervention, and Populist education. The conspirators did their work well; on November 12 a convention of angry men voted to adopt the combination of fusionist and Midroad elements sketched out by Manning and the Jeffersonian leaders. Tactically, Reuben Kolb endorsed this institutionalization of that "mistake," the Lakeview strategy of 1892. The more warlike among his loyal followers, however, resolved to keep their own
A day or two before November 12, tense men began thronging into Montgomery. The county meetings to select convention delegates had been held a few days before, following hard upon another controversial election. According to the official statistics, the only non-Democrat elected to Congress that year was a recent convert to Populism, M.W. Howard of the "Bloody Seventh." Reformers had turned out an excellent vote, as was evidenced by the subsequent seating of A.T. Goodwyn from the fifth district, and Republican brothers W.F. and T.H. Aldrich from the fourth and ninth. But as in the case of the August elections, hope of future vindication provided small consolation at the moment. The Birmingham People's Tribune, Kolb's organ, advised the delegate conventions to send their bravest men to Montgomery, "men who will dare maintain their rights at any cost." Many counties sent as many agrarians as were able to come.92 Heeding articles in the Montgomery Advertiser which declared that Kolb men in Birmingham were determined to establish a rump legislature, Governor Thomas Jones denied permission for the reform convention to meet in the House of Representatives chamber. The Populist and Jeffersonian leaders had to be satisfied with renting the Montgomery Theatre.93 There was a feeling of impending revolution in the air and, Manning's elaborate strategy aside, the fate of Populism in Alabama depended upon whether pro-violence or anti-violence spokesmen seized the initiative on November 12.

At 10:30 A.M. on that day, Albert T. Goodwyn pounded the gavel as Chairman of the Jeffersonian Democracy and "emphasized" that the convention was a "deliberative," not a constitutional body. With
this reminder to Grattan B. Crowe and his contingent, Goodwyn called
several speakers to the podium, each of whom recounted some aspects
of the August and November elections. Then A.P. Longshore, who had
been chosen permanent chairman of the convention, supervised the
appointment of a resolution committee well-stocked with such Populists
and "pacificists" as J.M. Whitehead, J.W. Pitts of Shelby County,
and W.M. Wood of Cullman County. Shortly thereafter, "loud cries" arose
for "Evangel Manning" to speak. By accident or careful stage-managing,
the young orator took the platform at a pregnant moment. He was before
a gathering torn between caution and fury. If he made the right speech
now, he could set the tone of the convention.

Manning started awkwardly, respectfully praising Kolb and telling
a few stump-speaking jokes. Soon, however, he began to address those
deleagtes who were absorbed in the "Governor's" wrongs. In less than
diplomatic tones, he discussed the awful price they had paid for keeping
the reform movement divided and subservient to one man's candidacy:

If you think that this is Kolb's movement, you are
mistaken. It is as much ours as it is his. If the
people of Alabama could have realized this, as Kolb
has, he would have been governor of Alabama today.

After this jab at the educational poverty of Kolb's last two campaigns,
Joseph answered a shout from the floor--"Let us declare him governor!"
with a dignified warmth which atoned for the rashness of his earlier
speech in Texas:

Let us be conservative . . . Let me tell the people that
we realize there is an element in our party clamoring to
seat the rightfully elected governor by force, but this is
not what we desire . . . We do not want the fathers of lit-
tle children in Alabama today to have their blood spilt as
dewdrops on the violets, but we do want these fathers to
live and pray and vote right, and persuade the people of Alabama to vote right.96

Manning was followed by H.W. Whatley, who denounced the Democrats as pure "Hamiltonians," and the non-violent, Populist group seemed to be in command. Possibly by pre-arrangement with Manning and his friends, Reuben Kolb delayed his appearance until 1:00 P.M., when "Mr. Manning of Clay demanded that the convention should see the governor of Alabama."97

At this juncture, Kolb made an artful and powerful speech designed partly to defend his reputation. "Whatever is decided today," he said, "No man in Alabama can charge that I have flickered. I intend to stay with you until hell freezes over, and then I will tackle them a while on the ice." Kolb spoke of devastating the Democratic Party with help from a friendly Fifty-fourth Congress, but his real opponents for the moment were his reformist critics, particularly Manning. In order to rally the convention behind his effort to unseat W.C. Oates, the perennial gubernatorial candidate adopted a stance of seeming agreement with the Populist leader, meanwhile placing his own interpretation upon the latter's words:

I want to emphasize that which Mr. Manning has said, that it was not Kolb in this fight . . . My individuality did not enter into it at all . . . It was the people of Alabama who raised up in their majesty and . . . twice elected me governor of this state.

But for all his maneuvering, Kolb did nothing to disturb the momentum of the growing impulse toward unification of the Populist and Jeffersonian parties. "During the last several campaigns . . . we were
called Jeffs, Pops and Reps," he noted but added, "I don't care what you call me just so you don't call me an organized Democrat."\(^98\)

Shortly after Kolb had finished his complex arguments, the meeting adjourned for lunch. When the delegates returned later in the afternoon, a number of orators began urging the Jeffersonians to join the People's Party and the ranks of national reform. By all accounts, the most effective speaker for "amalgamation" was Joseph Manning. No one took down his words, but it is likely that Joseph rang the changes on the quasi-religious themes of unity and brotherhood, ending with an affirmation of Populist faith similar to that which he had made before the joint convention of February, 1894: "We are one and the same people, and together we will have the same God and whip the world, flesh and the devil." One Democratic journalist wrote that "amid great applause, Mr. Manning made a speech which set his auditors wild," after which the convention voted for a union of the two agrarian parties.\(^99\)

After Manning sat down the convention took on a revivalistic air, as jubilant Populists and ex-Jeffersonians jumped to their feet and testified for the new order. The most interesting of these witnesses was a Straightout, J.L. Hosey of Calhoun County, who "came ... to represent the agricultural population, and was instructed to follow the footsteps of Manning and Tom Watson." Hosey wanted to "carry home the glad tidings that all these party names were wiped out, and that we are all fighting for the People's Party." On the Jeffersonian side, Kolb's lieutenant P.C. Bowman expressed his moderately enthusiastic belief that "the two parties existed only in name, they were one, and
everybody in the house knows that they have been one since 1890."

At the peak of excitement Manning, in a truly evangelical move, lined out "the hymn for the praise service":

All hail the power of the people's name, [and]
Let the ballot-stuffer prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
and crown the people sovereign all.100

Though the Populists had carried the day, they had yet to deal with the irrepressible enragé, Grattan B. Crowe. Late in the afternoon, Kolb's chief of militia demanded the floor and began a harangue which doubtless touched upon the feelings of many who were present. "The proper course for us to pursue," said the volatile physician, "is to take this government and run it." Crowe was an eloquent speaker, but he had missed the crucial psychological moment by failing to grasp the fact that peaceful means and Populism were bound together for the time being. Moreover, he betrayed himself by his own excesses. In his dreams, he related, "the angel of the lord" had "wiped these tarred holes off the face of the earth. There was not a block left in Montgomery or Selma." Still, despite the vein of madness running through his thought, Crowe offered his listeners an attractive formula of simple justice and emotional catharsis. The temptation to embrace his solution would cause much trouble among People's Party leaders in the months ahead. At last the firebrand wound up his talk with a remarkable peroration. "I had rather be called a midnight assassin," he said:

I had rather be called by the name of a man who would stand behind a tree and shoot at a ballot-box thief, than be called an organized Democrat . . . If the truth to be submitted to this convention is
strong enough to convince you that we won [the election], then by the eternal gods let us seat our governor if it throw us all into hell.101

There was applause after Crowe and one of his followers were through, but no one offered to march upon the capitol with them. Crowe's oration had necessitated an interruption in the business of the new People's Party, and now the convention pushed ahead to choose an executive committee. Though dominated by ex-Jeffersoninians, this committee was chaired by S.M. Adams and included J.M. Whitehead and Joseph Manning.102 The final triumph of the Populists and non-violent men, however, came at an evening session when W.H. Skaggs reported upon a coordinated plan of action proposed by the resolutions committee. First, said Skaggs, massive petitions for the restoration of republican government must be sent to Congress, and evidences of fraud must be distributed in a nation-wide campaign of publicity. At the state level Populists should work for a fair contest law, but take no overt action against the Oates administration unless their just demands were ignored. With the power of state and Federal troops against them, Skaggs argued, it was useless to establish a government which could not stand. The convention approved these resolutions and propositions, evidently by voice vote, and so opened a broader field for the agrarian movement in Alabama.103 When the delegates left the Montgomery Theatre at about 10:30 P.M., optimism and determination prevailed.

Yet it had been obvious that some reformers disagreed with the report of the resolutions committee. Throughout most of Skaggs' talk, G.B. Crowe and an important minority of delegates listened in "sullen silence," but when the convention approved the statement: We
deem it inexpedient at this time to inaugurate and maintain a de jure government," the doctor from Perry County stood up. "I would rather go to jail or a graveyard," said he, "than to go back home and tell them that there were proofs adduced of Kolb's election, but that we can't seat him." Reuben Kolb was thoroughly dissatisfied too, but he remained silent. The three-time candidate was in a strange position; he was certain that he had been elected, but the convention called to assert his rights had, instead of terrifying the Democratic Party, deliberately avoided making firm plans to put him in the statehouse. Kolb still possessed, as Grattan Crowe had hinted, the strongest electoral base of any man associated with the newly minted People's Party. When the legislature assembled the next day, therefore, "the Genial Reuben" would begin to exert pressure upon the Populist caucus, in order to lead its members toward a more decisive plan of attack. Determined to be governor, he clung to the hope that he might be inaugurated on December 1.

Even on his night of victory, Manning must have had an inkling of the work and trouble ahead of him. With hindsight it is easy to see his problems: leaders who refused to consider themselves bound by party policy, the minority position of his party in a state government dominated by Bourbons, and the logistical and ideological difficulties of attracting support among Northern Republicans. In addition, he would soon realize that such reformers as A.T. Goodwyn, W.H. Skaggs, and W.S. Reese were Populists in name only, and would be of little use in the radical campaign of education projected in his Choctaw Alliance.
letter. Despite these difficulties, a young man not burdened with hindsight doubtless found much in which he could rejoice. Manning was the authentic Populist leader of a united agrarian movement. He could not doubt that even an imperfect unity was preferable to the fragmentation which had marked reform politics in Alabama for over two years. Together with a diverse group of friends and allies, he had exercised a measure of control over Reuben Kolb, one of the most talented and unpredictable politicians in Alabama. He was confident, moreover, in his ability to lead his party in the legislature, confident that he could take the cause of republican government before the nation and influence both houses of Congress. Though his expectations were unrealistic, this much must be said: at twenty-four years of age, Joseph Manning had unified the ranks of Alabama reformers for their march toward ultimate defeat.
Footnotes to Chapter V

1. Original MS Returns, 1892 State and County Elections, Clay County, ADAH. Overcoming their misgivings, Clay Countians voted for Kolb over Jones by a margin of 1142 to 920. More important, county Populists were able to elect reform candidates to most of the local offices. Populist officials elected in 1892 include: Sheriff F.M. Munroe (1113 to 1017), State Representative R.D. Evans (949 to 901) County Superintendent of Education R.H. Fisher (1079 to 1039), and Probate Judge E.A. Phillips (1104 to 1023). In addition, the Populists elected three out of four members of the County Commission, the Tax Collector, and the Coroner. E.A. Phillips, in particular, was the indestructable patriarch of Clay County reform. Elected to his office from 1892 to 1900, this ex-schoolteacher retained enough prestige to be elected as a Populist to the Constitutional Convention of 1901. Among Alabama Populists, Phillips vied with J.M. Whitehead for honors derived from Confederate service. The Clay Countian could not boast Whitehead's colonelcy, but he had served four years under Longstreet. See Owen, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, IV, 1356, and Memorial Record of Alabama (2 vols.; Madison, Wisconsin: Brandt and Fuller, 1893), 1, 649-650.

2. Ashland People's Party Advocate, January 19, 26, 1894, and Butler Choctaw Alliance, January 31, 1894.

3. Original MS Returns, 1892 County Elections, Clay County. Names of beat level organizers and lecturers have been culled from the lists of Populist candidates for Justice of the Peace and Constable. Many of these local candidates (including such obviously "Anglo-Saxon" or Scotch-Irish gentlemen as W.H. Collier, A.H. Fargason, and J.C. Strickland) lost by narrow margins to their Democratic opponents. This fact, in light of the narrow Populist victories at the county level, may suggest that the Democratic "J.P.'s," most of whom were not large county merchants, were more entrenched among the voters who were literally their neighbors than were the "grandees" of Ashland and Lineville. The Populist candidates for Justice of the Peace and Constable, none of whom appear in the People's Party Advocate or the Clay County Advance as "prominent farmers" or professional men, were probably small farmers or tenants. As such, they would not have benefited from the votes of a sprinkling of "respectable" citizens who were hovering between the People's Party and the Democracy. The major candidates of Clay County Populism (H.C. Simmons, J.D. Mountain, M.W. Whatley, E.A. Phillips) were successful farmers, schoolteachers or ministers. In a close election, their status could have been important.
4. Ashland People's Party Advocate, January 12, February 23, July 20, August 3, 1894. Dodson, whose origins are unknown, edited the Populist weekly for two years. In addition to its extensive coverage of Manning, the Advocate is notable as a rich mine of biographical detail concerning Clay County Populists, and as a faithful user of W.S. Morgan's National Reform Press Association "readyprint" material. Much information can be obtained from the letters and articles contributed to the Advocate by such substantial farmers as J.T. Hudson, J.T. Mountain, Joshua Franklin, and S.M. McCullough; E.J. Stephens of Piedmont in Calhoun County and "Uncle Dick," an anonymous reformer, were also contributors. Most of these local writings were rough-hewn and convincing, as evidenced by the following passage from an essay written by County Superintendent of Education R.H. Fisher. Note the passionate jumbling of elements in his summary of public sorrows: "When you vote this time," said Fisher, "think of weary limbs, desolate homes, empty corn cribs, ragged tramps, rich millionaires, starving cattle, ignorant children, honest elections, scarce money, hard times, slick politicians, cheap cotton, unmerciful creditors, mortgaged homes, striking laborers, corrupt legislators, thieving congressmen and Wall Street presidents." See the Ashland People's Party Advocate, January 12, March 2, 9, July 6, 1894, and April 18, 1895. For basic information on the characteristics of Populist journalists and newspapers, see Semour Lutsky, "Reform Editors and Their Press," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1951), 21-24, passim.

5. Ashland People's Party Advocate, July 20, 1894, quoting the Wedowee Randolph Toller. This latter issue also quoted the Washington, D.C., National View: "Mr. Manning is well-known throughout the United States; he is a trenchant writer and an able speaker."

6. J.C. Manning to Ignatius Donnelly, May 26, 1894, in the Donnelly Papers. R.D. Evans was a relative of Democratic ex-Probate Judge Hiram Evans, and may have been under considerable family pressure to withdraw from politics. Two other contenders, Joshua Franklin and H.C. Simmons, desired Evans' seat. Both men had filed for the Populist primary, but neither campaigned vigorously. See the Ashland People's Party Advocate, April 27, 1894, and below.


8. Ibid., January 26, March 30, 1894, the Ashland Clay County Advance, January 19, February 2, August 31, September 14, November 16, 1894, and Owen, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, IV, 1156. M.N. Manning, W.M. Lackey, and Edgar L. Whatley, the latter of whom took over the Advance in 1895, were typical of the young, aggressive professional men who managed the Clay County Democracy after Judge Evans retired. W.M. Lackey to T.G. Jones, January 18, 1894, in the Jones Papers, demonstrates Lackey's working relationship with the governor.
9. Manning, *Five To Twenty-Five*, 18, 56-58. Obviously uneasy with the memory of his rebellion against parental precepts, Manning gives a saccharine view of his father's character. *Ibid.*, 46-50, contains an emotional scene in which, during the campaign of 1894, Joseph and his mother are fully reconciled, and she confesses that he is in the right politically. In practice, Manning encountered silence and aloofness from his brothers. Michael Manning, who mentioned Joseph's name as seldom as possible in the *Advance*, believed that Joseph had betrayed his heritage.


13. Ashland Clay County *Advance*, January 19, 1894, and the Ashland People's Party *Advocate*, April 20, 1894. Manning published a whole column of quotations from recent speeches in the latter issue of Dodson's *Advocate*. Several of these remarks have been used to represent Manning's speeches of May 10-12, since Dodson failed to print what the Evangel said at the time.

14. Ashland People's Party *Advocate*, April 20, 1894. Congress was in the process of considering, during the spring and summer of 1894, what became one of the most infamous tariff "reform" measures ever passed: the Wilson-Gorman Bill. See Josephson, *The Politicos*, 541-555.

15. Ashland People's Party *Advocate*, April 20, 1894. Clay County was eleven per cent black in the 1890's; see Hackney, *Populism to Progressivism*, Appendix I, 335. Manning's phrase, "the land and mule you have got" seems to be an effort to transfer the land-owning mentality of the Populist leadership to his black constituents, but the expression was more likely an oratorical "balance" for his "Forty Acres and a Mule" figure. Black voters were concentrated in Ashland and Lineville, as Manning knew.

16. Ashland Clay County *Advance*, May 18, 1894, and Ashland People's *Advocate*, June 8, 1894.

17. Ashland People's Party *Advocate*, July 6, 1894, February 26, 1897, and Ashland Clay County *Advance*, June 8, July 13, August 31, 1894. A pitiful figure, Simmons did apply for pardon for his son, Huntly Simmons, and he did speak for the Democracy in 1894. The People's Party lost in him a powerful voice. Though he died in 1897, older citizens of Clay County still remember his reputation for brilliant oratory.
18. Ashland People's Party Advocate, April 27, 1894. Franklin was the son of "wealthy parents" in Limerick, Ireland. He came to America just prior to the Civil War. Before migrating to Alabama, he lived in New York City and Virginia for unspecified periods of time. For a biographical sketch of Franklin, see Ibid., April 12, 1900.

19. See Ibid., July 6, 1894, for a letter from J.M. Leverett, J.M. Kennedy, and S.H. McCullough, Populists of Delta community, denying that Manning had spread such rumors in their beat. Democratic charges were not put into print until the Ashland Clay County Advance of June 5, 1896, raked up the story. At that time Edgar L. Whatley, bitter enemy of his Populist Whatley cousins, stated that the tactic had been worked up by "some of the leaders in Ashland," and did not mention Manning as having been directly involved.

20. Ashland People's Party Advocate, June 8, 1894, and Manning, Five To Twenty Five, 48.


22. Ashland Clay County Advance, June 15, 1894.


26. Ibid. Another cartoon probably drawn by Manning was based upon an observation made by a well-known traveling preacher, Sam Jones. Jones had remarked that when a sinful preacher died, it was likely that the devil rode him around hell to show him off. The anecdote was widely quoted, so when the Advocate ran a silhouette caricature of Garrett being ridden by the devil no explanation was needed. In the Ashland Clay County Advance of July 6, 1894, H.N. Manning professed to be shocked by the Advocate's sacrilegious liberty.

27. Ashland People's Party Advocate, June 29, 1894.

28. Ibid., July 6, 1894. Manning always had a fondness for religious imagery, but his compositions and speeches of 1894 reveal a new, increasingly religious urgency. He was in this respect distinct from the more secular balladeers and poets of Populism. See Goodwyn, Democratic Promise, 351-386.
29. Ashland People's Party Advocate, June 15, 1894, quoting the Birmingham Evening News, May 6, 1894. Also see Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 277-278.

30. For the controversy over Oates as guardian of the public purse against ravenous classical scholars, see the Ashland Clay County Advance, June 15, 1894, and the Ashland People's Party Advocate, June 15, 1894. The Populist writer recognizes a strong interracial community of interests, and yet is all the more outraged with Oates because the "One-Armed Hero" was clearly willing to treat whites as unjustly as blacks.


32. Ibid., July 6, 1894. Manning's streak of racism, increasingly well-controlled and repressed by the mid-1890's, comes out most strongly when he discusses race relations in slavery days. As late as 1928-1932, in Five To Twenty-Five, 20-21, he wrote: "The master-servant condition embraced only the 'best' white people and the colored [people]. . . . The poor whites were completely on the outside of this and to themselves." This, he said, was one of the "advantages that the Colored people had with all [their] disadvantages and hardships . . . The poor white was white and too proud for this."

33. Ashland People's Party Advocate, July 6, 1894. In the same issue, Manning commented upon the shrinking resources of America in a manner reminiscent of Frederick Jackson Turner's "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1893), which he probably had not read. "With no Western wilds to flee to," Manning wrote, "thousands of men with no homes to go to . . . are now cringing at the feet of Goldbugs' parties the way dogs have cringed at the feet of masters." For more examples of how Populists regarded the emerging industrial capitalism as a perverse paternalism, see Norman Pollack, The Populist Response To Industrial America: Midwestern Populist Thought (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1966), 23-43, 61-75.

34. Butler Choctaw Alliance, July 18, 1894. Manning contended that living the straitened life of dependent debtors would deaden and "dwarf" the minds of farm and working-class children. Returning to the theme of warped paternalism, he claimed that "when the bonded debt and the [national] banking system was first being fastened upon the American people, aristocrats across the ocean said that chattel slavery is being abolished in the United States, but . . . a system . . . more preferable to the slaveholder is being established in its stead."
35. Ashland People's Party Advocate, June 29, 1894. The Omaha platform states: "The land, including all natural sources of wealth, is the heritage of the people, and should not be monopolized for speculative purposes . . . All land now held by railroads and other corporations in excess of their actual needs, and all land now owned by aliens, should be reclaimed by the government and held for actual settlers only." See Hicks, Populist Revolt, Appendix F, 443.


37. Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 46-48, the Ashland People's Party Advocate, June 15, 1894, and the Ashland Clay County Advance, July 15, 1894. The crowds at the "arranged" debates were larger, thanks to prior advertising, but the newspaper reports of the earlier debates are more complete.

38. McMillan, Constitutional Development in Alabama, 259-291. For excellent comments upon the interrelation between disfranchisement and the death of issue-oriented mass politics, see Kousser, The Shaping of Southern Politics, 6-8, 240-265.


40. Memorial Record of Alabama, I, 644-645. Blake had taught chemistry at Vanderbilt University.

41. Ashland People's Party Advocate, June 29, July 6, 1894. Before their meeting at Fox Creek, Manning and Blake had crossed swords in Union Beat, where the professor was "trapped [in] his own sluush and drowned."

42. Ibid., June 22, 29, July 6, August 10, 1894. To a Democratic candidate for State Senate, Manning said: "Go to your state executive committee, and go to Col. Gates and demand . . . that the people be given managers in the polling places in the Black Belt. Demand that these Black Belt bandits quit stuffing the registration lists!" At Coleta community, a Talladega County Democrat named Graham had explained that Negroes were the natural enemies of Democracy; but the Democracy, he said, was devoted to civil liberty and would not disfranchise them. Manning or Dodson commented in print: "If the negro always voted against Democracy, then the 70,000 negro votes which made Jones governor were stolen. What burning facts!" Manning's "Kitty, kitty" story can be found in Fadeout, 76-78.
43. Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 48-49.

44. Ashland People’s Party Advocate, July 27, August 10, 1894.

45. See ibid., July 6, 1894, for the judgement that Manning’s "fire-flame of eloquence burns too bright for anyone to efface."

46. Ibid. M.N. Manning may or may not have avoided enrolling known Populists, but the voting totals for 1894 were much higher than those of 1892. See below.

47. Ashland People’s Party Advocate, July 13, 1894, and July 27, 1894, quoting the Ashland Clay County Advance. Most of the stories involved H.C. Simmons, by all odds the most important apostate. Of course, news was also spread by word of mouth. Both newspapers printed sworn affidavits defending their respective allies from charges of rumor-mongering. See the Ashland Clay County Advance, July 13, 1894.

48. Ashland People’s Party Advocate, July 6, 1894.

49. Ibid., August 10, 1894.

50. Ibid., August 10, September 7, 21, 1894. In a close race, the allegiance of black voters could be an important factor. Of 565 voters registered for Ashland, for example, 48 were identified as black; of 150 voters registered for Pickneyville Beat, a typical rural community, 16 were identified as black. See the "Alphabetical List of Registered Electors, Precinct No. 6 (Ashland) in the County of Clay, 1894" and the "Alphabetical List of Registered Electors, Precinct No. 14 (Pickneyville) in the County of Clay, 1894," in the Clay County Probate Office, Ashland. Hostile comments in the Advocate may indicate that Clay County blacks surrendered to economic pressure. No doubt the Populists expected to lose the Ashland and Lineville beats, with their combined total of about a thousand votes. Yet in Five To Twenty-Five, 59, Manning recalls that a few citizens voted for him despite their normal "town" Democratic loyalty.

51. Original MS Returns, 1894 State and County Elections, Clay County.

52. Ashland People’s Party Advocate, August 10, 1894, and the Ashland Clay County Advance, August 10, 1894.

53. Original MS Returns, 1892 State and County Elections, Clay County, and Original MS Returns, 1894 State and County Elections, Clay County. In the 1892 legislative race, R.D. Evans defeated his opponent by 949 to 901 votes; Manning defeated Garrett by 1183 to 1143, an increase in total vote of 26+ per cent over that of 1892. In the 1892 Clay County gubernatorial race, Kolb out-pollled Jones by 1142 to 920 votes; in 1894 he carried the county by 1210 to 1175 votes, an increase in total votes of 15+ per cent over that of 1892.
54. See Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 237-241, 281-285. The official count was Oates, 111,075; Kolb, 83,292.

55. Information on the efforts of Republicans to reduce black registration in the Black Belt can be found in the Montgomery Alliance Herald, April 26, May 3, 17, 1894. Nevertheless, seventeen Black Belt counties gave Oates a majority of 37,633 votes. The evidence relative to Kolb's white vote is that larger numbers of both patrician and yeoman voters turned out for him than the returns indicate. After Governor Jones used state troops to break up a coal miners' strike in Jefferson and Walker counties (April-May, 1894), a number of miners vocally supported Kolb, who had criticized Jones' action. See Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 274-275, 283. Besides DuBose and Skaggs, a number of prominent ex-Democrats came over to Kolb in 1894. One of these was H.W. Howard of Ft. Payne in DeKalb County, Democratic chairman of that county from 1888 to 1894. Howard, who won election to Congress from the seventh district in 1894 as a Populist, was a convert to flat money radicalism. Many years later, he recalled the violent passions stimulated by the contests of 1894. "It will give you some idea of this bitterness," Howard observed, "when I state that my own father would not hear me speak, and said he would rather make my coffin with his own hands and bury me rather than have me desert the Democratic Party." See "The Autobiography of M.W. Howard,"122, and Harris, "The Political Career of Milford W. Howard," 11-12, 36-39.

56. See Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 228, and above, Chapter III; for Baltzell's remark, see the Montgomery Alliance Herald, May 10, 1894.

57. Butler Choctaw Alliance, May 9, 1894.

58. R.F. Kolb to W.E. Chandler, August 20, 1894, and Frank Baltzell to W.E. Chandler, November 26, 1894, in the William E. Chandler Papers, Library of Congress (hereinafter cited as LC). See also the Montgomery Advertiser, August 11, 12, 1894.

59. For information on both the partisan and the principled aspects of Chandler's career, see Leon B. Richardson, William E. Chandler, Republican (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1940), passim, Josephson, The Politicos, 228-230, Stanley Hirshon, Farewell to the Bloody Shirt, 190-235, and Welch, George Frisbie Hoar, 136-142, 152-160.

60. Reuben Kolb to W.B. Chandler, August 20, September 24, 1894, in the Chandler Papers. Morgan allegedly told a gathering of Alabama Congressmen that were he young enough, he would join the Populists himself. See Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 215, 246, 299 and Howard, "The Autobiography of M.W. Howard," 112-113. For current opinion on the prospects of the Fifty-fourth Congress, see the Montgomery Advertiser, October 26, November 8, 1894.
61. Ashland People's Party Advocate, August 24, 31, 1894; also see Joshua Franklin to W.E. Chandler, August 29, 1894, and J.C. Manning to W.E. Chandler, April 6, 1896, in the Chandler Papers.


63. J.C. Manning to Davis Hanson Waite, December 30, 1893, in the Waite Papers, and the Ashland People's Party Advocate, August 10, 17, 24, 31, 1894.

64. Ashland People's Party Advocate, August 10, 17, 1894, the Troy Jeffersonian, August 17, 1894, and the Montgomery Advertiser, August 9, 10, 16, 19, 1894. The address was issued by Skaggs' State Central Committee; it urged Alabamians to act on August 23 in a manner "creditable to their revolutionary sires."

65. For the date of Manning's marriage, see the Ashland People's Party Advocate, August 31, 1894.

66. Ashland People's Party Advocate, August 10, 1894.


68. Montgomery Advertiser, August 24, 1894, the Butler Choctaw Alliance, August 29, 1894, and the Ashland People's Party Advocate, August 31, September 7, 1894. The meetings were small, probably because the rank-and-file members of the agrarian parties were stunned and disheartened. In addition, a number of reformers exhibited disillusionment with Kolb's leadership. This was the case in Coosa County, where an Honest Election League was formed, but not before State Senator-elect R.S. Nolen had promised that there would be no attempt to seat Kolb "with the points of bayonets until it was known that [he] was entitled to be governor." See the Butler Choctaw Herald, September 20, 1894. In the strong Jeffersonian counties of Pike and Crenshaw, however, Leagues were formed without such reservations. See the Troy Jeffersonian, August 31, 1894.

69. Montgomery Advertiser, August 23, 1894, quoting the Greenville Living Truth. For similar, if much earlier advice, see Robert McKee to W.H. Skaggs, February 18, 1894, in the McKee Papers.

70. Montgomery Advertiser, August 22, 1894, and the Ashland People's Party Advocate, August 31, September 7, 1894.
Montgomery Advertiser, August 29, September 18, 28, October 2, 1894, and Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 287-288. The Populist organ most nearly expressing Manning's "Lakeview" strategy was the Butler Choctaw Alliance, which on September 26, 1894, opposed fusion with either of the old parties, while keeping "the latchstring on the outside of the door" to anyone willing to endorse Populist goals.

Ashland People's Party Advocate, August 24, 31, September 14, 21, October 5, 12, 19, 1894.

Montgomery Advertiser, August 16, 19, 24, 1894.

W.H. Skaggs to Robert McKee, March 19, 1894, in the McKee Papers.

For Baltzell's illness and speculation upon his exclusion, see the Montgomery Advertiser, August 31, 1894. Curiously enough, Kolb's ardent supporter J.M.K. Guinn of the Wedowee Randolph Toller had accused Baltzell of selling out to the Democrats. The Advertiser noted with disgruntlement that it should not have to defend Baltzell from such charges. Besides, the fiery editor had been busy editing an irregularly issued anti-Democratic sheet, the Montgomery True Democrat. For a different perspective on Kolb and DuBoas's People's Tribune, see Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 256-257, 286-287.

Montgomery Advertiser, August 19, 1894.

M.H. McAllley to T.G. Jones, August 18, 1894, in Box 33, Official Governor's Papers, ADAH.

Crowe publicly revealed his militia-raising activities just over a year after he had begun them; see the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, November 21, 1895. Concerning the Glass murder, see the reports of Agent T.N.V., in W.A. Pinkerton to T.G. Jones, October 25, 31, November 2, 1893, in the Jones Papers.

Ashland People's Party Advocate, September 14, October 19, 1894, and the Montgomery Advertiser, September 28, 1894.

Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune, November 8, 1894. After a bitter but surprisingly peaceful summer, political violence was again on the rise in Alabama. The same issue of the Tribune reported "a bloody fight" which killed two and wounded several in Shelby County.

Georgia C. McElderry to J.W. DuBose, March 17, 1897, in the DuBose Papers.
82. Ashland People's Party Advocate, September 14, November 9, 1894. The roots of these Populistic economic concepts are complex. Daniel T. Rodgers, in The Work Ethic in Industrial America, 1850-1920 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 17, 1-29, traces the labor theory of value as far back as John Locke, who had "announced that all property took its title from labor." This belief, infused by the Populists with a class interpretation of America's economic development, became what Norman Pollack has called "a highly positive critique aimed directly at the profit system" as manipulated by financial monopolists. See Pollack, Populist Response To Industrial America, 29. Radicals such as Manning and Dodson carried on the fight by affirming the dignity of labor and laboring men, but not all of their Jeffersonian allies agreed with them. Mustin, in "Albert Taylor Goodwyn," 27, notes: "Albert believed that to labor with the hands in the fields was degrading . . . He himself, though a farmer all his life, never did manual labor." For further information upon the ramifications of Alliance economic radicalism, see Goodwyn, Democratic Promise, 79, 91-92, 110.

83. Montgomery Advertiser, October 21, 1894. Dothan was a populous commercial center in Henry County, Oates' home base. Coverage of the brief Manning-Oates debate is unsatisfactory; a Democratic reporter gloated that Oates demolished the Populist with the "facts" of the "Kolb-Rep" structure in Alabama. "The dreamy, long-haired Evangel," on the other hand, was said to have confined himself to "cheap, sophomoric oratory."

84. Montgomery Advertiser, February 9, 1894.

85. Butler Choctaw Alliance, October 17, 1894. In the Georgia state elections of 1894, the People's Party, even by Democratic count, polled 44.5 per cent of the total vote and reduced the Democratic majority from a previous 90,000 to about 20,000. See Woodward, Tom Watson, 269.

86. Butler Choctaw Alliance, October 17, 1894, and the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, September 26, 1894.

87. Butler Choctaw Alliance, October 17, 1894.

88. Ibid.

89. Ashland People's Party Advocate, September 21, October 5, 1894, and the Montgomery Advertiser, October 19, 23, 25, November 13, 1894.

90. Montgomery Advertiser, November 13, 1894.

91. For an excellent short treatment of the congressional elections of 1894, see Rogers, One-Cellused Rebellion, 287-289.
92. Ibid., 290, quoting the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, October 25, 1896; also see Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune, November 8, 1894. Ultimately, about 250 delegates and several hundred spectators attended, mostly from central Alabama counties. See the Eufaula Times and News, November 15, 1894.

93. Montgomery Advertiser, September 26, November 11, 1894.


96. Montgomery Advertiser, November 13, 1894. Regarding Manning's course of moderation, see the Ashland People's Party Advocate, December 7, 1894, quoting the Montgomery Evening Journal.

97. Montgomery Advertiser, November 13, 1894. In an effort to placate his critics, Kolb had announced one week before the convention that he would never be a candidate for governor again. See ibid., November 4, 1894.

98. Ibid., November 13, 1894, and the Eufaula Times and News, November 15, 1894.


100. Montgomery Advertiser, November 13, 1894, and the Eufaula Times and News, November 15, 1894.


102. Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, April 25, May 16, 1894.

103. Montgomery Advertiser, November 13, 1894.

104. Ibid.

105. Kolb possessed an unshakeable faith in his appeal to the voters. There is in Box 94, Official Governors' Papers, a touching exchange of correspondence between Kolb and his wife and conservative Governor W.D. Jelks. Nine years after his last gubernatorial defeat, Kolb urged that he be appointed Railroad Commissioner, because: "I really don't believe (and I say it without egotism), that you could appoint any man who would be more acceptable to all the people. It would certainly please all my former followers and tend more to reunite all our people than any other act of your administration . . ." See R.F. Kolb to W.D. Jelks, January 22, February 26, 1903.
CHAPTER VI
OPPOSITION LEADER AND FRUSTRATED ORGANIZER

On the morning of November 13, 1894, eight reformist Senators and thirty-six reformist Representatives were seated in the twin chambers of Alabama's domed statehouse. 1 Judging by the available evidence they were a homogenous group. Generally speaking the Populist legislators were both literate and articulate, though only Representatives Joseph Manning, G.B. Deans of Shelby County, and Dr. Charles P. Banks of Franklin County, and Senator A.T. Goodwyn were college-educated. Most of the reformers were stable, landowning citizens, controlling acreages ranging from the 480 acres owned by Representative W.C. Mixon of Coffee County to the 1000 acres amassed by Senator R.S. Nolen of Coosa County. Among the Hill and "wiregrass" counties in which many of the agrarian lawmakers resided, these were large farms. Representative R.T. Ewing's 640 acres, for example, made him a substantial landowner in his native Cherokee County. 2 A surprising number of the Populist legislators were engaged in agriculture-related businesses. Representatives H.C. Ellis of Elmore County and J.C. Killebrew of Dale County owned or were connected with family milling operations, while Representatives W.S. Forman of St. Clair County and W.M. Coleman of Marshall County were real estate dealers. 3 In terms of social and economic prestige in their home counties, the Populists seemingly withstand

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comparison with their Democratic counterparts in all but two
categories of "respectability": a much smaller percentage of the
reformers had been Confederate officers, and few or no Populist
lawmakers were lawyers, as opposed to fifty percent of the
"nonagricultural Democrats." A

Yet it is scarcely fair to judge the Populist Representatives
and Senators by the standards of the Bourbon Democrats they sought
to overthrow. The agrarians' constituents judged them on the basis
of service to the Farmer's Alliance, the Jeffersonian Democracy or the
People's Party, and by such standards many of the Populist legislators
were outstanding men. Most of them, like Representatives E.C.
Jackson of Lee County, J.H. Harris of Chambers County, A.P. Taylor
of Cleburne County, and W.C. Mixon of Coffee County, were long-
time Alliancemen or Alliance lecturers. Others, such as Representa-
tives Joseph Manning, G.B. Deans, and A.J. Hearn of Choctaw County,
were tested leaders of the People's Party. A Agrarian voters, moreover,
elected their candidates to the legislature without much regard
to previous political experience. A.J. Hearn, for instance, was a
Baptist preacher "called" to work for the cause of Alliance-Populism;
landowner R.T. Ewing of Cherokee County had gone about his business
apolitically indifferent to the appeals of parties, until the re-
formist call to arms of 1892. Representatives E.C. Jackson and W.C.
Mixon and Senator R.S. Nolen, on the other hand, had run for many
offices before 1894, while Senator A.T. Goodwyn was one of the
rising political careerists in Alabama. As the largest legisla-
time minority in Alabama since Reconstruction, these diverse law-
makers of 1894-1895 possessed a unique opportunity to speak authoritatively on behalf of a majority of the state's population. And the Populist members, as they speedily proved, were indeed willing to fight tenaciously and courageously for the program of action ratified by the Populist-Jeffersonian convention of November 12, 1894. They were likewise willing to follow the strong leadership which emerged from among the legislative ranks.7

On the night of November 13, the Populist legislators caucused in the Senate Chambers, thus initiating a series of meetings destined to have a considerable impact upon the 1894-1895 session and upon the future of the People's Party. Albert T. Goodwyn presided as senior Senator, though Reuben Kolb was present as secretary. Several non-legislators, including Kolb, Warren S. Reese, Frank Baltzell, and W.H. Skaggs, regularly attended meetings of the Populist Caucus. On November 13, as later, that body decided upon policy as if it were an executive committee or an ad hoc convention empowered to speak for the party.8 Second in command of the Caucus was Joseph Manning, described by most sources as Goodwyn's chief support, and as a moving force behind the preservation of Populist unity. In a letter written years later, Manning's friend Warren S. Reese, Jr., himself a non-legislator, remembered that:

We used to foregather . . . the night before any important measures would come up in the House, for the purpose of drilling our Populist members how to vote . . . I can see you [Manning] now, then about twenty-four years of age, in that inimitable oratory of yours, impressing upon these Populistic brethren that they must remain true to the faith.9
On the floor of the House, Manning was likewise a marked man.

After a few days of watching the Populists in action, Horace Hood of the Montgomery Journal concluded that he was "unquestionably the leader of [the opposition] movement" in the legislature. And to the surprise of many who had expected the Populists to set up a rump government, Hood was able to report that Manning, "instead of being a 'fire brand,' ... has proved to be a deliberate and working member." Tensions were high in Alabama in November of 1894, and it was doubtless reassuring to many Democrats to read in the Journal that "the conservative course of Mr. Manning has ... increased the faith of the Populists in their leader." But Hood and other Democratic journalists misunderstood, at first, the peaceable and seemingly conciliatory attitude of the Populist leaders. In order to direct a large and volatile Populist minority, both Manning and Goodwyn were forced to marshal all their resources of dignity, flexibility, and personal prestige. Neither man was willing to concede the legal status of the Jones and Oates administrations. Nor was either disconcerted when, in due time, the Democratic praises turned to curses. Together with a working majority of the Caucus, these reformers imparted a considerable measure of consistency and purposefulness to the legislative record of their party.

The legislature of 1894-1895 met at a time when the legitimacy of the Democratic government of Alabama was widely questioned. To make matters worse for the Democracy, on November 14, 1894, Governor Thomas Jones sadly announced that the state treasury, a victim of depression, was steadily declining toward bankruptcy. Two issues,
therefore—civil legitimacy and fiscal reconstruction—naturally dominated the meetings of the House and Senate. The first half of the session was devoted, in large part, to debating questions of ballot fraud and electoral contest, while Populist leaders attempted to keep Reuben Kolb and his followers from establishing a "dual government." The second half, from the end of Christmas recess to adjournment, was given over more to consideration of the financial dilemma, as Populists and Democrats struggled to define their attitudes toward changes proposed in Alabama's tax structure. Each complex of issues overlapped, colored and intensified the other, and spokesmen for both parties carried versions of each controversy far from Alabama. W.C. Oates, for example, traveled to New York in search of vitally needed credit and monies. Joseph Manning and his allies traveled to meetings in Washington, St. Louis, New York, and New Orleans to denounce Bourbon incompetence and tell the story of the elections of 1892 and 1894. The session, then, was neither staid nor entirely predictable. It should be understood, rather, as a meeting of bitter enemies at a time of profound crisis. Yet there was an important difference between the combatants. Strong as they were, the Populists were a minority, and as such unable to enact legislation. The Democratic majority, unified by the instinct of political survival, were able to entrench themselves at their opponent's expense.

The resolutions adopted at the joint convention of November 12
committed reformers to working for a contest law, and said nothing about seating Reuben Kolb. All Populists understood, however, that to be acceptable such a law must be retroactive to August 6. That is, it must be a law under which Kolb could be seated after a fair investigation. The Populist legislators were determined to lose no time in carrying out their mandate, and on November 14, A.T. Goodwyn proposed that a joint committee be selected to frame a retroactive election contest act. Amazingly, the Democratic senators had not caucused upon the matter, and several of them voted with the Populists; still the resolution was tabled, 15-16. Nothing daunted, Goodwyn tried again and again; on November 27, for instance, he saw his contest proposal buried in the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections. As late as December 14, after Populists in the House had introduced contest legislation to no avail, the Populist Senator reminded his unhurried opponents that the people still "suffer[ed] the oppression of lawlessness" in their electoral laws.

The Populist leaders were under no illusions as to Democratic intentions. On November 17, the day set aside for the official tabulation of returns, the Democratic legislators intended to confirm the election of W.C. Gates. After that, there would be time enough to talk about reform. The Populist Caucus made plans accordingly, and as the returns were being opened before the General Assembly, A.T. Goodwyn rose to protest. Reading from a petition signed by forty-three legislators, Goodwyn solemnly impeached the legitimacy of the
totals reported from fifteen predominantly black counties, "on account," he said, "of the monstrous frauds committed in the election of August, 1894, whereby the result . . . was to defeat and reverse the will of the people as truly expressed." Goodwyn had offered a similar protest in 1892, but without so many men at his back in the legislature or (potentially) in the streets of Montgomery. The attitude of the Democratic leadership had not changed in two years, however, and Speaker Thomas H. Clark of Montgomery County, having ruled the Populist petition out of order, refused to allow it to be mentioned in the official record. After a brief argument against such high-handed parliamentary autocracy, Goodwyn and his colleagues allowed the election of Oates to proceed. They had been rebuffed, but so far events were falling within a pattern anticipated by the reformist tacticians. 16

On November 19, Albert T. Goodwyn attempted to insert an account of his protest into the Senate Journal. Denied permission, he and his friends kept up the attack for three weeks, doggedly accusing the Democratic majority of imposing a "gag rule" to cover up the existence of Black Belt frauds. It was only on December 5, after Goodwyn and Senator R.S. Nolen of Coosa County had rehearsed the charges against the Democracy for the third or fourth time, that the mere fact of the Populist protest was entered in the journal. 19 Such victories, however small, aided the Populists' campaign to bring down "the scorn of the nation," as Joseph Manning put it, upon Democratic practices in Alabama. Certainly the story of Goodwyn's efforts showed,
as one historian has written, that "charges against 'machine' Democracy had some basis in fact." 20

But not all reformers shared even a meagre satisfaction with the deliberate course adopted by the Populist Caucus. In his speech at the close of the November 12 convention, W.H. Skaggs had urged the "revolutionary" faction of the new People's Party to hold off their plans to seat Kolb, at least until the legislature had had a chance to act. Yet to Reuben Kolb and a number of his devoted adherents, the vote-counting of November 17 had been that chance. The day after Goodwyn was first over-ruled, the old Jeffersonian presided over a meeting of his supporters, including several legislators and such dignitaries as Lee Crandall, former Populist congressional candidate from the eighth district and editor of the Washington, D.C., National View. 21 Determined to see justice done to their beloved "Governor," the group ratified a manifesto he had written. Released to the press on November 19, Kolb's statement reviewed at length the political events since the August 6 election, and treated the resolutions of the recent joint convention as an ultimatum for redress of grievances. By this reasoning, the dismissal of Goodwyn's protest was a sufficient and final provocation, and Kolb, accordingly, asked his friends across Alabama to meet him in Montgomery on inauguration day, December 1. The old agrarian chieftan threatened no violence, but he was clearly through equivocating. With dignity, he concluded the manifesto with a straightforward declaration: "You, fellow citizens, have twice elected me governor of this state and this time, by the grace of God and the help of the good people of Alabama, I will be governor." 22
Kolb's announcement provoked a national response. Conservative newspapers from the Cleveland Plain Dealer to the New York Times claimed that the Alabamian and his followers were anarchists. A Republican sheet, the St. Paul Pioneer Press, expressed the hope that the Populists might be annihilated in the event of a fight. At home, the Mobile Register headed the ranks of Democratic newspapers in predicting a slaughter should Kolb carry out his plans, while Governor Jones, who had been warned of a Populist plot against his life, quietly increased the number of troops at his disposal. Publicly, Jones stated that the state government would tolerate no disturbance on inauguration day. Privately, many thoughtful citizens must have agreed with Robert McKee, who told an unknown correspondent that repeated election frauds had "overthrown our republican government, ... wrought out among us a state of organized anarchy, and brought us to the verge of bloody revolution." As the confusion mounted in Montgomery, A.T. Goodwyn and Joseph Manning attempted to preserve the outlines of the official Populist strategy. In practical terms this meant that the Populist Caucus must choose a strong candidate for U.S. Senator, for the House and Senate were to make their selection in joint session on November 27. Astute men knew that neither the "respectable" North nor its representatives in Congress would come to the aid of a senatorial contestant who could be portrayed as a wild-eyed Southern revolutionary. In light of the bad publicity attendant upon Kolb's impending "dual government," Manning especially was determined to find the proper man to assist in a campaign of moral education in the North. He was
confident that full exposure of Alabama’s political ills in Congress, in the newspapers, and on the hustings would enable Northerners to perceive "the overwhelming sense of justice behind [the Populist] appeal." Therefore on November 20, upon Manning’s nomination, the reformist legislators "elected" Warren S. Reese, an ex-Jeffersonian once described by the Atlanta Constitution as a "splendid type of the younger South."26

A planter and cotton factor with genteel Virginia blood in his veins and a sterling record as a Confederate officer, W.S. Reese was the epitome of respectability. But after serving as mayor of Montgomery from 1885 to 1889, he had exchanged a promising Democratic career for a life of altruistic struggle as "State Organizer" for the non-agricultural Citizens Alliance. He was in addition a faithful and pacific worker for Populist, Jeffersonian, and Republican candidates.27 After the predictable reelection of Senator J.T. Morgan on November 27, Populist leaders viewed the courtly Montgomerian as a mainstay in the effort to awaken the reforming spirit of the nation. Equally important, Reese’s campaign would bear directly upon all of the disputed races in Alabama politics. If successful in his contest, the new Populist Senator might be of real service to the cause of his old friend Kolb. For it was Reese’s duty to argue, Manning recalled, that:

in fact, Alabama was without a republican form of government. He contended that, had those candidates for the legislature [from] the Black Belt, who ran for election on the Kolb fusion ticket, been permitted a fair election, . . . the fusion party would have had a majority in the General Assembly . . . Reese held . . . that the Governor [who gave] Morgan a certificate of election had been counted in as Governor of Alabama by identically the same Black Belt fraud as enabled Morgan to present the Senate a certificate of election. 28
Since August, work had been ongoing to back up these claims with the testimony, affidavits, and signatures of thousands of Alabamians. Now, however, the Populists' long-range strategy was threatened by Kolb's precipitate action. Somehow, the "Genial Reuben" must be persuaded to put his plan in abeyance, or modify it greatly.

In an effort to establish the primacy of the Populist Caucus and its policy, A.T. Goodwyn called a meeting of the reformist legislators and notables for the night of November 29. The Caucus leaders understood that they were risking a widening of the latest rift in agrarian ranks, but Goodwyn, Manning, Reese, Balfzell, and others were willing to incur Kolb's wrath if the possible bloody denouement of December 1 could be averted. The "Governor" was invited to the gathering but failed to show up, which left the most important question of the evening--Were the Kolbites intent upon using violence?--hanging in the air. To increase the tension still more, the gas lights in the Senate Chambers failed, forcing the Populists to conduct their business under "lightwood" torches, "amidst a most wierd and impressive scene." In that atmosphere heavy with smoke and emotion, eavesdropping reporters could tell that, during a heated debate, "all were not kind words that were spoken in regard to the proposed [inauguration] of Captain Kolb." Yet the legislators were trapped.

Kolb's manifesto had been in essence a declaration of independence from the discipline of the People's Party, a declaration given force by the power of his great popularity and deserved reputation as a political martyr. At best, the Caucus majority could only reaffirm
the importance of the legitimate party program, insist that the projected ceremony be entirely non-violent and symbolic, and denounce those Democrats who were seeking to provoke a blood-bath from a safe distance. The next day, Manning rose in the House on a question of personal privilege to condemn the "sensation mongers" who had represented "the yeomen of Alabama" as "anarchists and revolutionists." Then, no objection being raised from the floor, he read into the minutes a cleverly hedged resolution:

By the Populist Senators and Representatives of the General Assembly in caucus assembled: That the action of our state convention held in this city on the 12th instant, meets with our full endorsement, and that all reports published by an unfriendly press to the effect that any violence or lawlessness is contemplated on the first proximo are absolutely false and are circulated for the purpose of bringing our party into disrepute among patriotic citizens.31

Having stated their position, a number of Populist lawmakers met with Kolb at his house on the night of November 31. There, in all probability, Goodwyn and Manning (or their Caucus allies) received assurances that no agrarian demonstrator would initiate an act of violence. By that time, the Kolbites' preparations were complete and there was little to do but wait.32

The citizens of Montgomery were prepared for anything on December 1, 1894. The weather was balmy, and Democratic banners hung in windows and storefronts. Early in the morning, several companies of state militia began assembling on the capitol grounds at the top of "Goat Hill," the eastern terminus of the town's main business street, Dexter Avenue. Also patrolling the high ground were thirty-five
smartly uniformed horsemen belonging to an elite unit, the "Montgomery Mounted Rifles." Though W.C. Oates' inauguration was not scheduled to take place until noon, crowds of spectators were visible on the streets by mid-morning. Of the hundreds of men and women who came out to witness the expected trouble, many were farmers and plain folk, none of whom openly carried weapons. Even so, it was apparent that only a fragment of Kolb's army of supporters were able to meet him in Montgomery, if for nothing more than a peaceful show of solidarity.  

At 10:30 A.M., Kolb and the Jeffersonian candidates for Attorney General, Secretary of State, State Auditor, and State Superintendent of Education took their oaths from Justice of the Peace J.W. Powell at the latter's office on South Court Street. Next, the "Governor" and about a dozen of his friends made a short journey to the law offices of Warren S. Reese, Jr., which were located near the intersection of Court Street and Dexter Avenue, several hundred yards from Goat Hill. There, the new "administration" was met by as many as two hundred supporters, and a march upon the capitol building begun.  

It is impossible to name many of the Populists who made that risky walk. Grattan B. Crowe and W.S. Reese, Jr., marched the whole way. Joseph Manning and Representative A.J. Hearn of Choctaw County waited for the Kolbites at the top of the hill. By 11:00 A.M., the small formation of reformers, greatly outnumbered, faced the tangible array of Democratic power.  

Upon arriving at the destination toward which he had worked for so long, Kolb hesitated. Then, perceiving Thomas Jones standing upon the
capitol steps where Jefferson Davis had been sworn in as president of the Confederacy in 1861, the determined agrarian led several of his lieutenants toward the Bourbon governor. Jones, an old military man, had his forces under tight rein. He politely shook hands with Kolb, and after a brief parley refused all permission to speak or demonstrate from the capitol grounds. 36 The new "Governor" and his supporters descended through the troops to Bainbridge Street, which runs at right angles to Dexter Avenue. There, in the teeth of the militia, reformist marchers were urging their hero to make his speech from the bed of a wagon. Again Kolb hesitated, until Manning spoke up: "Go ahead, Captain, they may kill you, but you will go down... as a martyr to the Populist cause." Kolb was no coward, and Manning's words (or perhaps the exquisite irony which they conveyed) decided him. He climbed into the wagon, and after an invocation offered by A.J. Hearn, delivered the first of the day's two inaugural addresses. 37

Kolb's speech, quoted sparsely by the Democratic press, was a masterful if qualified statement of determination. "You have seen your just demands," he told his followers, "deliberately set aside by the legislature, itself only a creature of the [state] constitution... If the party in control of your government be not arrested in its mad career, no election can be held in Alabama under the law." Having justified his action in taking office, the "Governor" again demanded, "in the name of an outraged constitution, ..., that a contest of election statute be promptly enacted." 38 And, since the legislature must be convinced that the "de jure" administration meant business, Kolb counseled the citizens of Alabama to adopt a course of action which, in
light of the distressed condition of the state treasury, could have
proved to be a peculiarly effective form of passive resistance to the
"fraudocratic" regime. Cautioning his supporters against violence
for the time being, Kolb asked his "friends . . . to pay no tax money
to any collector of taxes." The "Governor" concluded his speech,
moreover, by advising "those collectors who value the cause I
represent to delay all payments of state taxes into the State
Treasury." 39

Kolb's conditional pacifism was echoed by Grattan B. Crowe,
who, as one Democratic sheet sarcastically remarked, had "by some
strange metamorphosis developed [into] a law-abiding citizen." Still,
there was violence in the tone with which the reformist fire-eater spoke
to the Populists scattered over the street and grounds, saying: "Do not
commit any overt act by which these usurpers, these infernal scoundrels,
can take advantage of you." Nor were the Perry Countian's concluding
remarks calculated to spread a spirit of forbearance among the Kolbites.
"This evening in Warren Reese's office," he said, "I would like to meet
every man who is here, . . . to join me in getting up a company of
volunteers to back our Governor Kolb." 40 When Crowe stepped down, the
reformers in the crowd dispersed without incident, and Reuben Kolb
walked back into town with his closest advisers. The three-time
candidate had at least the satisfaction of knowing that he had kept
his word; he was "Governor."

Meeting unarmed foes face to face, Thomas Jones had been neither
belligerent nor abusive; the Democratic leaders in the House were not
so disposed. On December 3 Representative Thomas Knight, a rising young
Bourbon from Hale County, introduced a bill which would have made it a
felony to "usurp" a state office or incite others to do so. The same day Representative Samuel Will John, an ambitious former Black Belt politician who had taken up residence in Birmingham, angrily proposed that the House Committee on Privileges and Elections determine whether any Members had taken part in the recent "illegal and revolutionary" inauguration ceremonies. The John Resolution was referred to committee to be used if needed, but Knight's Usurpation Bill, after perfunctory and admiring "consideration" by the Judiciary Committee, came up for a vote two days later. Clearly, the measure was designed to shield the Democracy from the consequences, or even from the inevitable criticism of its acts. Loosely worded, the Knight Bill threatened future Populist protestors with jail terms. The Populist legislators were unruffled by the Democrats' blustering and authoritarian tactics, and on December 5 Joseph Manning asked to be allowed to explain his party's position. If state law had provided reasonable and legal means for combating fraud, he began, then the proposed law would have been relatively harmless. But under present conditions, and without a fair contest law attached to it, the Usurpation Bill was tyrannical and dangerous. Manning's arguments had little effect, and the bill passed on a strictly partisan vote, 49-20. Yet many Alabamians of all parties agreed with the young Populist, including the editor of the Huntsville Tribune, a North Alabama Democratic journal influenced by the up-country reformist spirit. The Usurpation Bill said the Tribune, was a truly "revolutionary" monstrosity capable of protecting any number of Black Belt "gangs" bold enough to seize state offices and masquerade as "rightful" govern-
ments. The whole question of "usurpation" was fraught with grave political and constitutional dangers, and the more perceptive Democratic senators preferred neither to risk a North versus South Alabama newspaper war, nor to increase the chance of Federal intervention in Alabama politics. Consequently, they passed over the new measure until after the Christmas recess, "promising" to act upon it then.

Examined out of context, the Knight Bill seems merely a crude and emotional attempt to intimidate Reuben Kolb and his supporters. The Populists, for their part, saw the legislation as part of a settled plan to consolidate the oligarchic power of the Democratic Party. The uncertain character of the times and the impatience of the Bourbon majority in the House had slowed down the process for the moment, but A.D. Sayre of Montgomery, politic leader of the Senate and author of the crucial Sayre Law of 1893, was the very man to insure that future electoral and contest acts would be more subtly crafted. When Populist Representative A.J. Hearn commented that "the majority wears honors that rightfully belong to the minority" party, his words carried a more than numerical significance. For it was increasingly obvious that should their power survive congressional scrutiny, the Democrats intended to prevent the numerically superior "minority" voters from winning honest victories, or protesting dishonest defeats.

After the vest pocket revolution of December 1, Reuben Kolb understood that, barring massive intervention by the federal government, only an armed rebellion could make him a governor in fact. Still under the influence of Grattan B. Crowe, he began to advocate a policy of military preparedness. Upon this point, he was consistently
opposed by "the conservative element" of his party, and most particularly by Joseph Manning, who seemed "liable to cut Kolb completely out as the future leader of the Populites."\(^{46}\) Despite his factional indentification, Manning formulated a peacemaking scheme whereby Kolb was to issue certificates of election to the Populist congressional contestants. The probable acceptance of such certificates by the Republican majority in the next U.S. House of Representatives, Joseph said, "would afford a temporary endorsement of Kolb as Governor, and would be a source of trouble to the Oates administration."\(^{47}\) Kolb agreed to consider the proposition, but he did not allow it to affect his stance in favor of raising agrarian troops. Finally on the evening of December 8, the Populists caucused secretly and a major showdown ensued. The Nashville Banner's sources reported that while proponents of a "shotgun solution" were in a minority, they were determined; Kolb and Goodwyn were said to have engaged in the most acrimonious exchange of all. The Caucus President, for his part, left in a huff before the meeting was over, leaving it to his lieutenants to persuade Kolb to wait out the legislative session. The latter's adherents subsided reluctantly, and less than a month after its triumphant recreation, the effective life of the People's Party hung in the balance.\(^{48}\)

Yet for all their squabbles over Kolb's "de jure" administration, the Populist legislators worked out broad areas of agreement concerning other fundamental issues brought before the legislature. Their ability to work together was founded in the soil; most of the reformist
legislators were in close contact with the aspirations and fears of the small landowning, renting, or sharecropping farmers. In general, the Populist lawmakers represented both the wishes and the interests of these constituents. And upon no issue, save that of ballot reform, were agrarian interests and beliefs more clearly separate from those of the Democracy than upon the question of state finances.

A long-impending financial crisis hung over the 1894-1895 session of the legislature. Briefly, the Treasury of Alabama was suffering the combined effects of two ill-matched but historic Democratic policies: expansion of the activities of state government, and reduction of taxes. Property taxes, as Thomas Jones explained in his Annual Message of November 1894, had been steadily reduced from seven mills in 1876 to four mills in 1890, while tax assessment was left in the hands of locally elected, poorly supervised officials. Then in 1893, the sudden intensification of a lingering agricultural depression had caused the government's income to fall below expenses, forcing Jones to borrow heavily from the "New York and Security Trust Company." A year later he renewed the loan, but at six per cent such Wall Street salvation could not continue indefinitely. Most Alabamians, including the new Governor-elect W.C. Oates, were ignorant of the magnitude of the danger to the state's fiscal "honor." Legislators and citizens alike were horrified at Jones' projection of a $700,000 deficit in 1895. The situation, moreover, was acutely embarrassing for retrenchment-minded Bourbon Democrats, and the presence of a large and vocal Populist minority was likewise disconcerting. As was the case in the battle
over electoral reform, the inter-party division over finances was in one sense a function of conflicting attitudes toward political freedom. On the other hand, the state's financial difficulties presented the Populists with an unprecedented and unlooked-for opportunity to cripple the Democratic regime.

To many Democrats, solutions to the fiscal crisis were relatively clear. On November 11 the Montgomery Advertiser, which spoke for the Jones administration and the Bourbon faction, declared without apologies that the legislature must raise taxes and confer the power of tax assessment upon the executive branch. Representative S.W. John of Birmingham and a fluctuating group of urban moderates and Silver Democrats, however, favored centralized assessment as a means of regulating the state's under-taxed corporations. A student of the then-nascent "Progressive" wing of the Democracy has concluded that the problem of efficient tax assessment was among the questions "which remained of fundamental concern to reform-minded Alabamians for the next fifteen years." Bourbons and proto-Progressives were agreed that the reputation and solvency of the state must be preserved; within this framework of agreement, both Jones and Oates suggested legislation involving higher taxes and executive appointment of assessing officers. Recognizing that "the last two years have not been seasons of prosperity," Jonas urged the Democrats to begin their work cautiously. Assuming that "better modes of assessment" could be secured, he said, a small "additional tax of half a mill" would place the state's affairs in "an healthy condition." Restructuring the revenue system would require time and compromises, but a tax increase
could be disposed of quickly. On December 4, House Democrats introduced the half mill addition. There was no doubt that the measure would pass, though observers must have wondered how, in the tumultuous first days of Kolb's "administration," the Populist Caucus would respond to the challenge.  

The People's Party men, for their part, were united against the tax increase. When the tax bill came to a vote in the House on December 8, Populists voted against it 21–2. When the new rate passed the Senate four days later, all eight reformers were in opposition. As Democratic journalists understood, the motives behind the Populists' stance were largely humanitarian. The Mobile Register, for instance, had urged the legislative majority to stand firm upon its program, warning: "The people are in distress; they want the burden of taxation reduced, and will naturally resent any contrary action." The Silver-Democratic Opelika Industrial News touched upon the same sore point when it openly criticized the callousness of the Bourbon lawmakers: "The legislature knew that it was perpetrating an outrage upon the already-outraged farmers of the state when it levied that additional tax." Yet reformist opposition to Democratic policy was more than an economic defense mechanism. In several instances, the Populists' reluctance to vote funds for the Jones and Oates administrations stemmed from their fundamental opposition to Bourbon Democratic government.

In 1893, when Thomas Jones first announced that the state was borrowing money, Jeffersonians and Populists understandably concluded that the Governor had squandered state monies in order to
buy votes for his own reelection. Suspicion deepened during the next two years, as reformers noticed that the militia prospered while schoolteachers frequently went unpaid. For most agrarians, the spectacle of troops massed in Montgomery on inauguration day, 1894, was the last straw. Convinced of the tyrannical and extravagant nature of the "de facto" regime, the Populist legislators persistently voted against appropriations for inaugural expenses or the state troops. As late as February 4, A.T. Goodwyn nearly came to blows with Senator Francis Pettus of Lowndes County, after having accused the Democracy of fomenting military rule. The situation was made considerably more tense, from the standpoint of the Oates administration, by the reformers' announced intention of mounting a national campaign of education against election fraud and other abuses in Alabama. The stability of state finances was to a large extent dependent upon the good will of New York financiers, and William W. Screws of the Montgomery Advertiser predicted, correctly, that a majority of reformist leaders would work "to create a lack of confidence" in the state government, and thus deprive it of the sinews of war.

Screws' fears were amplified by evidence of a split within the Democratic Party over financial policy. The trouble started during the first week in December, when Democratic Senator William Samford of Lee County introduced two bills which would have made "state warrants" legal tender for payment of taxes in Alabama. Samford's inflationary plan, similar to an experiment made by the Bourbon government of Mississippi in 1894, was merely an amplification of
the system already in use, whereby the state advanced its warrants as
promissory notes for requisitions and credit operations. But
Populists welcomed the Warrant Bills as "fiat money" measures, and
A.T. Goodwyn made a point of declaring that "the people he represented,
... a majority of the white people of the state, favored the
bill[s]." On December 6, the Populist Senators, taking advantage
of an 11-11 division among the Democrats, voted 6-1 in favor of the
Warrant Bills proposal, which passed 17-12. The scheme was
promptly buried in the House Ways and Means Committee, but conserva-
tives were thoroughly alarmed. What most disturbed W.W. Screws,
aside from what he must have regarded as the naiveté or treachery of the
inflationist Democrats, was the prospect of the Populists exulting
as a flood of warrants drove the state treasury "to the wall." In
retrospect, it is clear that Screws overestimated the importance of
the Warrant Bills controversy. Portentous as they were, the legisla-
tive quarrels over "fiat money" were mere skirmishes in comparison to
the battles fought in shifting combinations by Populists, Bourbon
Democrats, and "Progressives" over tax assessment.

On January 23, 1895, Representative R.B. Kelly of Anniston
introduced a measure which, in addition to providing for centralized
appointment of assessing officers, included unusually detailed
procedures for evaluating corporate property. The Kelly Bill,
warmly endorsed and supported by S.W. John, would have upgraded
state inspection and regulation of big businesses and banks, and
forced such corporations as the Louisville and Nashville Railroad
to shoulder a larger and more equitable portion of the recently
increased tax load. The measure was for the most part a reform-minded proposal in the true spirit of Southern Progressivism. But conservative legislators had laid their plans, and Kelly's "revenue" bill was referred to the Ways and Means Committee, where a Bourbon majority produced a "Substitute" shorn of regulatory clauses. 64

The future of the Kelly Bill thus depended upon the attitude of the Populists, many of whom, whatever their reluctance to bolster the solvency of the current administration, frankly viewed centralized assessment as a threat to democracy. Most notably, Joseph Manning expressed his confidence that "the people would overthrow" any tax statute enacted "against local self-government." 65 According to Manning's logic, the Populists should oppose both the Kelly and the Substitute Assessment Bills. Either measure would abolish the single elected office of County Tax Assessor in favor of a system of "Equalization Boards," each of which was to be composed of one elected member, one member appointed by the County Commissioners, and a chairman appointed by the governor. Both of the proposed laws, moreover, bristled with sections requiring heavy bonds of taxpayers who desired to appeal the decisions of the Boards, and threatening stiff fines for those who did so in order to "skulk" paying their taxes. 66 Nevertheless, some People's Party men were attracted by the undeniable regulatory potential of the Kelly Bill, and by the manner in which its sponsors sought to broaden the state's tax base. A few reformers, astonishingly, were influenced by a fear of betraying Alabama's financial "honor"—such was the power of conventional teachings—and were willing to consider voting for centralized assessment despite a complete distrust of
Democratic government. The complexity of the agrarians' responses to the two assessment proposals can be gauged by Populist Representative Nelson Fuller's admission, early in the legislative session, that he thought that the farmers were [over] burdened, and the citizens in cities and towns were not fair in giving their taxes. He favored saving the credit of the state, but [declared that] his people had recently been denied the right of self-government.67

The limits, and to some extent the nature of Populist support for revenue "reform" were revealed in two votes taken in the House on February 9. First, all of the Populists present—many of them deliberately choosing the lesser of two evils—joined the Progressive leaders in a successful effort to table the Substitute in favor of the Kelly Bill. But shortly thereafter, a Bourbon counter-motion to table the revived Progressive legislation lost by a hair, 36-36, with the agrarians voting 15-11 in favor of tabling. Apparently, Kelly and John failed to take seriously the warning of the second vote, and assumed that the passage of their fiscal reconstruction was assured. The evidence, however, suggests that Manning and his allies, perceiving that the People's Party contingent held the balance of power between bitterly divided Democratic factions, began a campaign to unify the Populist Caucus against any centralized assessment measure, no matter how dressed up. Manning believed that he could thereby defeat all assessment bills.68

By February 12, the day the Kelly Bill was up for a final vote, its agrarian support had noticeably declined. Early in the day, People's Party men voted with Samuel John to preserve those parts of the bill designed to tap corporate wealth. There is no way of
knowing whether the Populists allowed the Progressive floor leaders to believe that they would back them to the end; but when a Bourbon representative made what proved to be a premature attempt to table all assessment legislation, the Populist division was 17-8 in favor of tabling. As the moment of decision drew near, several reformers, probably including Joseph Manning, G.B. Deans, A.J. Hearn, and J.H. Harris, could be seen moving among their cohorts arguing against the Democratic measure in hurried whispers. These last-minute talks must have been effective, for to the chagrin of S.W. John and his followers, the Kelly Bill failed by a vote of 32-49; the Populists had opposed it, 1-26.

In the aftermath of the Populist "victory," the Democratic factions did not react as the agrarian leaders had expected. On the afternoon of February 12 a special committee, composed of Bourbons and Progressives, was appointed with instructions to propose a workable revenue bill. Under pressure to produce a statute before the session expired, the Progressives capitulated and agreed to support a variant of the Substitute Bill, which passed the House by a strictly partisan vote the next day. On February 18, a non-regulatory centralized assessment measure became law without the benefit of a Populist vote in either house.

After the enactment of the administration's tax program, Democrats of all stripes denounced the reformist legislators. Sam Will John was so angry over the defeat of the Kelly Bill that he read a special "Protest" into the House Journal, in which he lumped the Populists together with "the champions of the monied interests" as
opponents of good government. W.W. Screws decided that the People's Party men had shown the "Italian hand" on February 12, and concluded: "It is plain . . . that they were deliberately trifling with a great question involving the honor and integrity of the state." Yet the Populists had voted against every one of the proposals by which Bourbons and Progressives alike hoped to bolster the state government. Moreover, the leaders of the Populist Caucus had maintained repeatedly that free institutions, which they believed could not exist under a reign of fraud, were more important than administrative efficiency. In the end, therefore, the agrarians rejected the Kelly Bill as both undemocratic and inextricably tied up in the fabric of Democratic rule. Looking back on the 1894-1895 session for the benefit of the New York press, Joseph Manning delivered a blast which encapsulated the Populist viewpoint:

Since Governor Oates was seated de facto governor by soldiers with forty rounds of cartridges buckled around their waists, his counted-in administration has found it necessary to not only raise the tax rate, but also to provide a new and unjust revenue law.

Interestingly, in light of the Progressive claim that the Populists behaved treacherously over the Kelly Bill, the two groups worked closely together throughout the consideration of an Oates-approved bill authorizing the refunding of Alabama's bonded indebtedness at lower rates of interest. The measure was not necessary to preserve the financial "honor" of the state, since most of Alabama's three and four per cent bonds were valued above par. But the concept of refunding possessed obvious attractions at a time of fiscal crisis, and no representative questioned the need to minimize outlays.
Populists and Progressives, however, objected to a clause guaranteeing payment of interest on the new issues in gold. Inflationist legislators correctly interpreted the gold payment provision as an extension and imitation of Grover Cleveland's goldbug policies—and on more than one occasion the debate left Alabama affairs behind while Joseph Manning, Sam Will John, and others "roasted" the President. In the House on January 31, thirty-three Populists and fifteen Progressive or Silver Democrats united to strike all mention of gold coinage from the proposed legislation, in a 48-40 vote. Conservatives refused to give up, however, and on February 13—four Populists being absent and three Democrats having decided to change sides—the administration's version of the Refunding Bill passed, 42-41, after a sharp debate. The measure was speedily whisked through the Senate, and the Bourbons were triumphant. Yet People's Party men had the satisfaction of knowing that Democratic unity was again in a shambles, since this time S.W. John and several of his supporters had remained in opposition to the end.

As a minority, the Populists were unable to thwart the designs of the masterful Bourbon wing of the Democracy. By any standard, though, they demonstrated an admirable persistence in fighting for civil liberty and for their constituents' interests. Throughout one of the most acrimonious legislative sessions since Reconstruction, they remained dedicated to their principles, while attacking the enemy's weakest points. Only time would show whether the Democracy would crumble under the continuing pressure of adverse publicity, financial
It was the special duty of Populist spokesmen to expose Democratic frauds, and Joseph Manning took that obligation to heart. The first priority of the state People's Party, he believed, was to solicit the aid of the Republican North in "breaking down the oligarchies" which dominated the political life of Alabama. Yet, as he studied reports of electoral frauds in Georgia, Tennessee, Louisiana, and various cities of the North and South, Joseph began to perceive the outlines of something which transcended the affairs of any one state. Ever since the Lakeview Convention of 1892, the demand for "a free ballot and a fair count" had provided the impetus for cooperation among Alabama Populists, Jeffersonians, and Republicans. The promise of fusion had been brutally denied in Alabama, but Manning knew that elsewhere, fusionist organizations were flourishing upon a "Lakeview" basis. In North Carolina, Populists and Republicans had carried both houses of the state legislature in 1894, after putting out a joint ticket pledged to electoral reform. In New Orleans and New York City, middle class reformers had organized bipartisan leagues devoted to stamping out municipal corruption and ballot box stuffing. The New York Reform League, the more widely publicized of the two groups, enjoyed the support of such wealthy luminaries as J.P. Morgan, Charles Fairchild, and Abram S. Hewitt. In the November 1894 city elections, the League had played an important part in the victory of Reform Republican mayoral candidate William L. Strong, who had polled over 150,000 votes in an anti-Tammany crusade.
With these developments in mind, Manning came to believe that the single issue of Ballot Reform might be made to serve as a unifying battle cry for anti-Democratic reformers over the South and nation. Increasingly after the November 12 convention in Montgomery, he began to think in terms of founding an organization of his own, regional in scope at the very least, through which he could help free Alabama from Democratic tyranny and "continue my work of turning on the light in the South." His ideological fervor of the previous summer was in abeyance, but he took the view that such work as he was doing was vitally necessary if Populist demands were ever to obtain a fair hearing. And as fortune would have it, he was soon placed in the position of being able to present his argument before a national forum of the People's Party.

In December 1894, H.E. Taubeneck invited hundreds of reformers to St. Louis, to meet with the Populist National Executive Committee. Scheduled for December 28, the gathering promised to be a scene of passionate contention, for Taubeneck, who understood neither the cultural aims nor the emotional symbolism of the agrarian movement, had announced his intention of leading the party toward a single-plank silver platform in 1896. To Manning, Lee Crandall, and S.M. Adams, who attended from Alabama, these impending debates were of considerable but subsidiary interest. Alabama's legislative holidays, which stretched from December 15 to January 22, had commenced nearly two weeks before the date of the St. Louis meeting. During the intervening time, Alabama Populist leaders had been diligently engaged in marshalling the evidence of Bourbon fraud, and in strengthening their reformist
Manning's chief object in visiting St. Louis, then, was to enlist the aid of the Executive Committee in a powerful campaign of education designed to secure ballot reforms for Alabama and the South. It is a tribute to his oratorical talents that at such a moment of excitement, when the People's Party was splitting into hostile factions, he was able to make himself heard.

Manning was fortunate, of course, in the alphabetical position of his state. When the roll call of delegations began, he was able to broach his subject before the Straightcuters and the Free Silverites had a chance to fall upon each other. Joseph's speech consisted largely of a dramatic account of the Kolb-Oates contest, and Democratic and Populist newspapers alike were impressed with the manner in which he "denounced the Democrats for again wielding the whip and shackles of old-time slavery." This opening gambit, however, was only the start of a two-day lobbying effort. Throughout the meetings, as the Midreaders tumultuously and successfully defended the Omaha Platform, the Alabama delegates worked for recognition of their cause. Their reward came at the evening session on December 29, when the conference accepted a resolution written by Manning, embodying the educational program of the Montgomery Convention of November 12:

In view of the fact that the state of Alabama... is without a republican form of government, because of a political larceny which has been perpetrated by monstrous fraud at the ballot box, we demand: ... that the Chairman of the National Committee appoint a committee of three... to submit evidence to the press of the country and to Congress to substantiate this... revolutionary conduct, that they may be awakened to the threatening of peril caused by [this] autocratic anarchy in [a Southern state].
The committee of agitation, which was chosen on the spot, included Manning, Lee Crandall, and the Straightout floor leader Henry Demarest Lloyd of Illinois, who was himself anxious to alert Southern Populists to the deteriorating conditions of life among working-class people in the North. Without consulting extensively with Lloyd, though, Manning hurried from St. Louis to Washington, D.C., where he met with a number of Southerners who were interested in the upcoming congressional contest cases. Such was his eagerness to begin work that, not two days after the National Committee meetings, he announced that he had "received communications from people [all over] the South" urging him to coordinate ballot reform activities within the region. He was planning, he told reporters, to form an organization, and had even selected a name, place and date; the "Southern Ballot Rights League" would hold its first convention in New Orleans on January 18, 1895. Whether or not these decisions had been made in haste, Manning clearly had little time for holiday leisure if he were to put together a multi-state organization before the Alabama legislature reconvened. And yet, summoning up a great burst of energy, he was already in the process of assembling an imposing force—on paper.

True to present strategy and past history, Joseph desired to attract the support of men whose motives were apolitical and "patriotic." For this reason he had communicated with reformist leaders in New Orleans, where a nonpartisan coalition of "typical middle-class Progressives" controlled the Louisiana Ballot Reform League. Formed in 1894 to protest the Tammany-like "ring" rule of New Orleans' Mayor
Fitzpatrick, the League speedily acquired several thousand members, including the nominally Democratic moderate Walter Denegre and the Democratic Secretary of State, T.S. Adams. There were in addition ties between the Louisiana Ballot Reform League and millionaire sugar planter John Pharr, head of the protectionist "National Republican" faction of the state GOP, and future ally of the Louisiana People's Party. As viewed by Manning from afar, such men seemed to have it in their power to lend stability and respectability to his ballot rights cause. Evidently the spokesmen for the New Orleans group had no objections to hosting what they thought, no doubt, would be a convention of like-minded advocates of "good government," and so Manning was able to secure one flank of his campaign against the Democratic oligarchies of the South.

Simultaneously, the young Alabamian sought aid from the major factions of the People's Party, and surprisingly, he found willing supporters on both sides of the silver question. The list of prominent Straightouts who agreed to help publicize the Southern Ballot Rights League included W.S. Morgan of Arkansas, head of the National Reform Press Association, Frank Burkitt, long-time Alliance-man and editor of the Okolona, Mississippi, Chickasaw Messenger, Alabamians C.F. Dodson of the Ashland People's Party Advocate and Frank Baizell of the new Jacksonville People's Journal, and J.H. "Cyclone" Davis, the famous orator from Sulphur Springs, Texas. Among silverite Populists, on the other hand, Marion Butler of North Carolina was a consistent and influential friend of ballot reform. Recently elected to the U.S. Senate by the fusionist legislature of his state, Butler...
had pledged himself to work for civil liberties in Congress and through the columns of his newspaper, the Raleigh Caucasian. His Republican counterpart Jeter Pritchard, elected by the same legislature, likewise cooperated with Manning; Pritchard subsequently defended Southern Populists before the Middlesex Club of Boston as "mis-represented" crusaders devoted to the "political and industrial emancipation" of their region. Despite the presence of such disparate elements in his organization, Manning was skillful enough to remain above the partisan quarrels of the day. H.D. Lloyd, for example, continued to sympathize with his purposes, though he must have objected to the "sound money" conservatism of many of the "patriots" involved in the ballot rights movement. Nor, from the viewpoint of either of the Populist camps, were the middle-class reformers the most objectionable of Manning's potential allies. For quietly, as the time for the New Orleans Convention drew near, Joseph opened up a Machiavellian phase of the game of coalition politics.

Where his Democratic enemies were concerned, Manning was an advocate of the strategy of "divide and conquer." To this end, in early January he invited Horace Hood of the Montgomery Journal and "Editor Greer" of the Opelika News, both of whom were free silver men deeply antagonistic to the Montgomery Advertiser, to send reporter-delegates to New Orleans. Both journalists replied in the affirmative, and the two newspapers covered the meetings favorably. A similar intra-party rivalry may have influenced editor Clark Howell of the Atlanta Constitution to agree to serve on the Executive Committee of the Southern Ballot Rights League. Howell and William W. Screws of the
Advertiser were violently at odds over every turn of national Democratic policy, and to Screws' outrage, the Constitution had given credence to Reuben Kolb's gubernatorial claims. Still further afield, Democratic editors A.S. Colyar of the Nashville, Tennessee, Banner and William Royall of the Richmond, Virginia, Times agreed to become executive committeemen in the projected league. The former, according to the Advertiser, had twice endorsed Kolb as the legitimate Democratic candidate for governor in Alabama; the latter was evidently associated with a group of anti-fraud Democrats, Populists, and Mahoneite Republicans who were planning a ballot reform conference in Virginia. As the would-be founder of a reform movement in the South, Manning understood the importance of winning over as many Democratic newspapers as possible. He knew, also, that if the Fifty-fourth Congress were to overturn electoral frauds in Alabama and elsewhere, reformers must be able to make the claim that all Southerners of good will desired a change in government. By January 10, it seemed to Manning that his plans were well-laid. He had taken steps to secure the support of important leaders and journalists of every persuasion. He had reason to believe that nearly two hundred delegates would attend his convention. Whatever happened, he wrote, he was determined to get "full publicity of the political situation in Alabama and the South . . . before the entire country."  

Upon his arrival in New Orleans on January 16, Manning found bad news waiting for him. First, the officials of the Louisiana Ballot Reform League had not even completed arrangements for renting a hall,
thanks largely to his nubulous instructions. Next, it became apparent that the bulk of the expected delegates would not be present on time. The eleven-man Alabama contingent was virtually the only group to arrive by the evening of the seventeenth. The New Orleans reformers were cordial and talkative, but Joseph must have realized with displeasure that their ideas ranged for the most part over two "solutions" which had been debated in Alabama in 1893: exclusion of "undesirable" voters through the Australian Ballot, and outright constitutional disfranchisement of blacks and lower-class whites. In his willingness to take advantage of all-embracing slogans, Manning had placed himself in the position, as J.M. Whitehead later remarked, of having to be "all things to all men." Even so, for the time being, he took refuge in the unlikely hope that his "absorbing desire for ballot reform" could inspire the creation of a genuinely popular movement.

Further weaknesses in Manning's planning were apparent from the moment that, at 12:30 P.M. on January 18, he despaired of any more delegates arriving and called to order the thirty-eight Populists, Republicans, and Independent Democrats who had assembled at the Washington Artillery Hall. Unfortunately, he had constructed much of his keynote speech around the presentation of newspaper anecdotes and quotations concerning the Alabama frauds. Consequently he was able to capture the attention of his listeners but could not, with such a parochial approach, move them to a sense of unity and purpose. A prefabricated constitution which Manning laid before the convention was no more inspiring. At great length, the document spelled out the self-evident truth that "it is a great and patriotic duty to maintain and
perpetuate the rights guaranteed to the American people by the [U.S.] Constitution," without describing what individual delegates, officers, or members of unborn local chapters must do to secure those rights. Only in his remarks upon the explosive question of race did Manning in any way challenge his audience. And he accomplished this feat at the cost of concessions to traditional mores which he would never have made before the farmers of Alabama.

Manning knew that he must treat racial matters gingerly. Most of his New Orleans hosts were "white supremacy men." One of these, B.R. Forman, would that very evening inform the convention that the "one possible solution to the problem of fraud . . . is to secure the disfranchisement of the negro." In such surroundings, Manning allowed an ordinarily repressed racism to enter his interpretation of Bourbon tactics. Still describing events in his home state, he observed that the "gross and enormous frauds" perpetrated by the Alabama Democracy were "not committed in support of white supremacy." Rather, he explained, "It is [a desire] to use the negro voting population, whether they vote or not, to keep down the supremacy of the sovereign white people, that [motivates] the enemies of [a] republican form of government." Continuing in this vein, Manning proclaimed that:

The right to vote distinguishes the free man from the slave . . . What form of slavery, then, can be more objectionable to white men than to have their votes annulled by ballot box stuffers, with fraudulently counted ballots based on a negro voting population?
Though Joseph Manning never shed his racism entirely, his New Orleans address marks a regression from the courageous racial stands of 1892 and 1893. Yet Manning, who was above a hypocritical renunciation of his Populist principles, found the means to instruct as well as placate the membership of the Southern Ballot Rights League. Whatever the temptation, he refused to blame the Negro for the state of politics in the South. Holding aloft a photograph of John Washington, an illiterate black "Republican" poll watcher notorious for his complicity with the Democratic bosses of Montgomery, Alabama, Manning spoke in a tone which conveyed understanding, not racial hatred. "Throughout the 'darker counties,'" he said, "many [such] do their service, that others with white skin but blacker hearts may do [their] worst." More important, his attitude toward the "problem" of black participation in politics set him apart from many urban Progressives and "good government" men in Alabama, Louisiana, and other states:

The negro question seems to be the bugaboo of the South, [he said], but if the negro was taken out of the hands of the politicians, [i.e., allowed to vote as he wishes] there would be nothing to fear from him. The politicians, while crying out against 'negro supremacy,' are the very men who . . . uphold the supremacy of rascals.104

With these remarks, Manning seems to have found his metier for appealing to middle-class and conservative reformers on behalf of all of the citizens of the South. In the future he would appear before dozens of urban audiences, North and South, in each instance arguing that true friends of ballot reform must cast aside sectional, political, and racial prejudices. In much the same manner, he concluded on January 18:
The issue is before us . . . Let us meet it as Americans, determined to uphold American institutions. Let us hurl behind us all partisan zeal, and sink into immeasurable depths all lesser passions. 105

Manning had determined upon an evening session, and found, to his delight, that attendance had increased to 175 men and women as a result of arrivals from Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and Virginia. Speaking with some difficulty over the noise made by a dancing party in an upstairs ballroom, the young orator read the list of dignitaries, most of whom were not present, who had agreed to serve as Vice Presidents and Executive Committeemen of the new organization. The convention readily endorsed these "nominations," including that of Manning as President, and approved at the same time the League constitution. 106 To crown his success yet further, Joseph read a telegram of congratulation from Reverend C.H. Parkhurst, Pastor of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church and President of the New York City Reform League. This was an important development, for Parkhurst, a powerful moralist, was known in many circles as "America's greatest reformer"; in addition he was a likely source of funds and lobbying support, and a living example of what could be accomplished through a nonpartisan coalition. 107 At length, the business of the evening optimistically concluded, Manning turned the podium over to a series of speakers.

Among the several individuals who sought to inspire this last assembly of the Southern Ballot Rights League, the most compelling was Congressman-elect M.W. Howard. Earlier in the day, the North Alabama Populist had stated emphatically that he had "faith in the grand masses of the American people, that the millions have not yet bowed the
knee to Baal." Now he urged the delegates to embrace the cause of human
rights, lest "passive indifference . . . make our children hewers of
wood and drawers of water." The speech was well-received, but its
effect was marred by the conservatism of the local sons who followed
Howard, of whom one at least was a staunch advocate of constitutional
disfranchisement. Matters were going downhill when, long before mid-
night, Manning adjourned the convention after requesting the particip-
pants to preserve an "unflagging interest in the object of the
league."

From the start of his regional work, Manning exuded an air of
preoccupation which crippled the potential of the Southern Ballot
Rights League. In his hands, the new "movement" seemed little more
than a vehicle for stirring up a powerful sentiment against the Oates
regime. Rather than publicizing a type of electoral abuse which was
rife in the Southern states, he persistently discussed "the object
of the league" in terms of Alabama politics alone. Of course, he
expected his organization to benefit from coverage in the newspaper
whose aid he had solicited, and he likewise hoped to enjoy the
support of the New Orleans States, the New York Tribune, and other
journals favorable to the municipal reform groups. But, as shown
in a series of letters he wrote to his friend H.D. Lloyd a few weeks
after the New Orleans convention, Manning's faith in the power of his
journalistic allies was excessive.

Joseph had been pressing Lloyd to take a more active part in the
anti-Democratic campaign, and in that connection was anxious to give
him his interpretation of one of the most striking political events of
1894: the mid-November decision of Georgia's Tenth District
Congressman-elect James C. Black to offer a rematch to his opponent
Tom Watson. To Manning, the explanation of Black's unprecedented
action was simple. Watson, unlike Reuben Kolb, was a "national
classictator" whose races were closely "watched by the nation's press."
Therefore, wrote Manning, the palpable frauds employed in the tenth-
district contest had been trumpeted abroad in the commercial centers of
the North to such an extent that Black gave in to the pressure of
local "business interests" and "resigned, not because his conscience
told him to, but because he had not the courage to face the contempt
of honest people." What publicity had done for Tom Watson,
Manning reasoned, it could do in one form or another for the Populists
of Alabama. Unquestionably, the young reformer had been correct in
assuming that the Democratic government of his home state was financially
vulnerable. Yet when the excess of his enthusiasm for the Populists'
congressional "victory" in Georgia is contrasted with the manifest
failure of the New Orleans meetings to generate the impetus necessary
for a mass movement, it appears that Manning was clucking at intellec-
tual straws.

During the period of the legislative holidays, Joseph was
horribly fatigued. Indeed his letters to Lloyd were written at a
time when he was recuperating, often of necessity away from home,
from a physical breakdown which he suffered in February. The
reasons for this bodily and probably mental exhaustion were several;
a year of incessant activity and extremes of emotion, the work of
putting into practice the Populist strategy of November 12, 1894,
the strain of keeping the peace within the People's Party, and the hopelessness of legislative activity in opposition to the Democracy, all told on his somewhat fragile constitution. Upon returning to Montgomery from New Orleans, Manning could have had few pleasant memories of the weeks of strenuous work which had gone into the making of the Southern Ballot Rights League. He was returning to the legislature, moreover, to face a battle over the passage of a fair contest law, the outcome of which could decide the fate of the agrarian movement in Alabama. 112

To the dismay of most Populist leaders, the restlessness of the Kolbite faction proved to be a durable element of the political scene. During the Christmas recess, the old Jeffersonian candidate had considered his future course of action, and on January 24, the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune carried a "gubernatorial" proclamation. Reiterating the charge that he had been cheated out of his rightful position, Kolb again demanded the passage of a retroactive contest law; otherwise, he feared that the state would suffer the "ultimate anarchy" of perpetual Democratic rule. While Bourbon newspapers predicted his political demise, Kolb vowed—not for the first time—that he would be put off no longer. Like other Populist strategists, however, he had reckoned without the cunning of the Democratic Senate leaders. 113

On January 23, 1895, Senator A.D. Sayre of Montgomery introduced a non-retroactive measure, which allowed for contests of elections for state executive offices on grounds of fraud or intimidation. 114
Populist efforts to amend or replace the bill were unavailing; the Democracy kept the electoral question pending until late in the session, when the insurrectionary weather was over. Meanwhile, Sayre's legislation had acquired the stamp and force of official Democratic policy, thus presenting Populists in both houses with a serious dilemma. Either they must go on record against a bill which promised fairer elections for the future, or they must widen the rift in their own ranks by voting for a measure under which Reuben Kolb would never be allowed to present his case. With no very good will, the reformist legislators chose the latter course. Only R.S. Nolan voted against the Sayre Contest Bill on February 11, when it came up in the Senate. On February 15 in the House, only C.M. Cole, J.B. Franklin, and A.J. Hearn opposed the wily Montgomeryan's creation. Joseph Manning spoke for the People's Party Caucus when he said that "the bill, although it may not be satisfactory to all the Populites, means a great deal to Alabama." To Manning, the new law was "a step in the right direction, though it may be but a step"; he hailed the "approach of a time in Alabama when the people can differ on a higher plane." But for all their seeming acquiescence the Populist lawmakers were furious. Nor was anyone surprised when, at a Caucus meeting on the night of February 16, Kolb and his supporters demanded that the State Executive Committee declare whether the party would back the "Governor" in setting up a "dual government." The Caucus agreed that the contest law was a "pretense" and formally requested Chairman S.M. Adams to call his committee together. Adams in turn set the meeting for March 12, 1895, and urged members of the last state ticket to
attend, since "matters of vital importance" would be discussed. Kolb, in all probability, was never closer to having solid backing for his long-considered "revolution."

During the weeks between the end of the legislative session on February 18 and the meeting of the State Executive Committee, Manning and A.T. Goodwyn lobbied steadily against what the Montgomery Advertiser called "Kolb's lawless proposition." The arguments against setting up a "de jure" government had not changed; even at the cost of permanently alienating the "Governor," the Populists' ruling body could not afford to accede to his wishes. Praising Kolb to the heavens for keeping his patience, months on end, "in the presence of a volcano ready to burst forth at his command," the committeemen merely suggested that the members of Populist clubs might consider undertaking exercises, military drills, and other healthful recreations. Underneath this seeming equivocation, however, was a strong undercurrent of faith in the Congressional Strategy launched by Manning, Baltzell, Reese, Goodwyn, and Kolb himself. Manning neatly summed up this awkward combination of nervous respect for the "Genial Reuben" and dogged trust in the efficacy of outside assistance, in an interview with a Nashville Banner reporter. "Kolb has been twice elected Governor," he said:

But although the Alabama legislature refused to allow him a contest in law, ... he is greater than governor in the knowledge that he has led a movement in Alabama which is slowly, steadily and surely destroying a corrupt government. He could cause a revolution now and get followers to march upon the capitol, but we will get Congress to march on Oates and his ballot box stuffers, and we want public sentiment and outraged justice to rise and bury him and his cohorts. The opposition to us are the Anarchists. We are the conservators of peace, and the party attempting to uphold justice. The executive committee [must] do nothing radical or revolutionary.
Having tried his best to keep the peace in Alabama, Manning's next logical step was to travel to New York City, where W.C. Oates was soon to negotiate the refunding of Alabama's bonded indebtedness and make final arrangements to stabilize the state's financial affairs. Joseph, for his part, hoped to expose Oates to the business and reform communities of New York as the leader of what was in essence an anti-republican military government. If he could thus thwart Oates' purpose, the revenge achieved would be both ironical and just, for Oates' August 1894 victory had well-nigh destroyed the future effectiveness of agrarian reform in Alabama. He knew, of course, that once within the genteel sphere of the New York Reform League, he could not afford to be a real Populist. Yet if Alabama were to be saved, it was too late to turn back. The Fifty-fourth Congress would meet in December 1895. Alabama Populists and Republicans had less than a year in which to persuade the North to rescue them from extinction and disfranchisement. It was therefore no wonder that in March 1895, though still uncertain of his health, Manning turned from the South with an air of great things to be done.
Footnotes to Chapter VI

1. The 1894-1895 legislature met from November 13, 1894, to February 18, 1895; Christmas recess ran from December 15, 1894, to January 23, 1895. Of thirty-three senators, eight were elected as Populists or Jeffersonians. They were D.W. Day from the second senatorial district (Lawrence and Morgan Counties), J.M.C. Wharton, third district (Blount, Cullman, and Winston Counties), J.S.E. Robinson, sixth district (Etowah and St. Clair Counties), H.W. Williamson, ninth district (Chambers and Randolph Counties), R.S. Nolen, tenth district (Coosa and Tallapoosa Counties), J.L. Hollis, twelfth district (Fayette, Lamar, and Walker Counties), A.T. Goodwyn, fifteenth district (Chilton, Elmore, and Shelby Counties), and P.M. Bruner, seventeenth district (Butler, Conecuh, and Covington Counties). Of one hundred representatives, thirty-three were elected as Populists or Jeffersonians, two as Republicans, and one as an independent Democrat. On November 13, these thirty-six men voted for Populist J.H. Harris for Speaker of the House against Democrat Thomas Clark of Montgomery, and continued to vote together throughout the balloting for subordinate House offices. Identification of the three non-Populists is difficult, since the reformist members were treated as a unit even in friendly accounts. The thirty-six reformers of November 13 were C.P. Banks of Franklin County, J.F. Bellingr of Blount County, T.J. Brown of Conecuh County, T.J. Burks of Cullman County, E.J. Beasley of Covington County, W.B. Beeson of Etowah County, C.H. Cole of Chambers County, W.M. Coleman of Marshall County, W.A. Cook of Talladega County, G.B. Deans of Shelby County, H.C. Ellis of Elmore County, R.T. Ewing of Cherokee County, J.E. Fielding of Limestone County, D.B. Ford of Winston County, W.S. Porman of St. Clair County, J.B. Franklin of Dekalb County, Nelson Fuller of Bibb County, R.A. Gains of Walker County, J.H. Harris of Chambers County, A.J. Hearn of Choctaw County, E.C. Jackson of Lee County, J.C. Killbrew of Dale County, E.B. Langley of Tallapoosa County, J.C. Manning of Clay County, O.M. Mabin of Chilton County, L.R. Meadows of Tallapoosa County, W.J. Mills of Crenshaw County, W.C. Mixon of Coffee County, S.A. Reaves of Randolph County, H.R. Robbins of Coosa County, J.C. Routon of Crenshaw County, Zack Savage of Fayette County, J.A. Smith of Butler County, H.M. Summers of Lawrence County, A.P. Taylor of Crenshaw County, and L.R. Wheelis of Lee County. See the Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Alabama, Session of 1894-5 (Montgomery, Alabama: Rosmar Printing Co., 1895), 1-10 (hereinafter cited as House Journal), and the Journal of the Senate of
the State of Alabama, Session of 1894-5 (Montgomery, Alabama: Roemer Printing Co., 1895), 5 (hereinafter cited as Senate Journal). For information submitted by the People's Party of Alabama to the U.S. Congress concerning the partisan structure of the 1894-1895 legislature, see the Congressional Record, 54th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 5, 4453-4454. An untrustworthy discussion of the Populist legislators may be found in the Butler Choctaw Alliance, August 29, 1894. For the geographical distribution of reformist legislators, see attached Map #11.

2. For information on the educational status of G.B. Deans and C.P. Banks, see Owen, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, III, 93, 475. For information on the amounts of land owned by R.T. Ewing, W.C. Mixon, R.S. Nolen, and the family of W.A. Cook of Talladega County, see the Memorial Record, I, 636, 676, 736 and II, 950. Note too that H.C. Ellis of Elmore County and T.J. Brown of Conecuh were listed as "planters" (large landowners) in Owen, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, III, 536, and the Memorial Record, I, 705. Hackney, Populism To Progressivism, 3-31, concludes that the Populists and Jeffersonians were restless, failure-prone men who joined the agrarian movement in emotional rejection of a society which had left them behind. The basic strength of the People's Party, according to Hackney, was drawn from the class of small agriculturalists which he calls the "superfluous farmers." In particular, Hackney describes the Populist membership of the 1894-1895 House of Representatives as less well-educated, poorer, less distinguished militarily and professionally, and less experienced politically than their Democratic antagonists. To the extent that the Populists were attempting to overthrow an oligarchy, the argument has some validity; oligarchic politicians tend to belong to entrenched upper classes. Hackney has made these assertions, however, based on what he admits is a biased source: T.M. Owen's Dictionary of Alabama Biography. Owen, the founder of the Alabama Department of Archives and History, was a dedicated historian but a lifelong Democratic loyalist. Indeed, in writing the biographies of Populists whom he admired, he sometimes concealed their political affiliations; for a highly selective biography of the elder W.S. Reaves, for instance, see Owen, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, IV, 1422. Owen is certainly the best single source of information on the Populist legislators of 1894-1895, though he discusses only nine representatives and one senator. But Hackney, by limiting himself to the standards of distinction brilliantly perpetuated by a Bourbon gentleman, inevitably discerned the "superiority" of the Democratic leaders.

4. Among Populist legislators, A.T. Goodwyn had been a Confederate Major and W.B. Beeson had been a Confederate Lieutenant. Other Populist lawmakers, however, had been distinguished soldiers, notably R.T. Ewing, who had been an infantryman for four years under Lee, and had fought in all the major battles of the Eastern Theatre. See ibid., III, 125, 620, 757, 891, IV, 1206 and the Memorial Record, I, 636. Hackney, Populism to Progressivism, 29, reveals that twenty-eight per cent of the Democratic representatives had been Confederate officers. But his concentration on the legislature automatically excludes from consideration the military records of such reformers as J.M. Whitehead and W.S. Reese, both of whom attained the rank of Colonel. R.F. Kolb, for that matter, made political capital out of a Confederate Captaincy. See Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 263.

5. For information on individuals mentioned, see the Opelika Industrial News, June 27, 1895, Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 171, 173, the Birmingham Age Herald, April 9, 1892, the Memorial Record, I, 676, Owen, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, III, 475, and the Ashland People's Party Advocate, March 15, 1895.

6. For information on the individuals mentioned, see Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 133, the Memorial Record, I, 636, 676, 736, Owen, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, III, 891, and Mustin, "Albert Taylor Goodwyn," 31.


8. Montgomery Advertiser, November 14, 1894.

9. W.S. Reese, Jr. to J.C. Manning, December 2, 1927, in Manning, Fadeout, 143. W.S. Reese, Jr., should not be confused with his father, W.S. Reese, who was the Populist candidate for U.S. Senate in 1894. The younger Reese was a Montgomery lawyer and Jeffersonian candidate for State Attorney General in 1894, and one of the men who accompanied Kolb during the latter's dramatic march up Dexter Avenue on December 1.

10. Ashland People's Party Advocate, December 7, 1894, quoting the Montgomery Journal. In June, 1894, Hood had predicted to Robert McKee that following the August elections, "the sabre will jostle you on the sidewalk and the bayonet will glisten around the state-house while pandemonium reigns within." See Hackney, Populism to Progressivism, 66.

11. For the full text of Jones' message to the legislature, see the House Journal, 15-60.

12. For information on the various trips and tours mentioned, see below, Chapter VI and Chapter VII.
13. A majority of Populist leaders expected that the legislature would deny Kolb a chance to contest for his seat. Thus the Populists had fallen back upon the Balfour-Manning Congressional Strategy. No one was certain what would happen if W.E. Chandler and his allies were able to deny Senator J.T. Morgan his seat, but the agrarians hoped that a Republican Fifty-fourth Congress would declare that Alabama lacked a "republican" form of government, pass an elections law similar to the Force Bill of 1890, and hold new elections.


15. Montgomery Advertiser, November 28, December 15, 1894, and the Senate Journal, 64, 275. Reformers in the House made several efforts to secure contest legislation, the chief being a retroactive measure introduced by R.T. Ewing of Cherokee County on December 10. The Ewing Bill, which languished in committee, listed revealing grounds for contest: illegal appointment of election officers, misconduct of election officers, bribery, illegal registration of voters, insertion of illegal votes, and suppression of votes legally cast. Many of these grounds were incorporated into the Sayre Election Contest Law, passed on February 15, 1895. See the Montgomery Advertiser, December 11, 1894, and the House Journal, 376.


17. Ozark Banner, November 22, 1894, and the Ashland People's Party Advocate, October 12, November 23, 1894. The fifteen counties mentioned by Goodwyn were: Autauga, Barbour, Bullock, Dallas, Greene, Hale, Lowndes, Macon, Marengo, Monroe, Montgomery, Perry, Russell, Sumter, Wilcox. See attached Map #12.

18. Montgomery Advertiser, November 18, 1894, and the Ozark Banner, November 22, 1894. For Goodwyn's earlier protest, see Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 234.

19. Montgomery Advertiser, November 20, 27, 28, December 6, 1894. In the copy of the Senate Journal owned by the Alabama Department of Archives and History, however, there is no mention of the protests. It is probable that this "error" was made by the government printers months after the session had ended.

21. For information on Crandall, see Lee Crandall to Robert McKee, July 11, 1893, in the McKee Papers. Crandall was interviewed by a Chicago Tribune reporter upon returning to Washington, D.C., from Alabama, "fresh from the conference of Kolb men." See the Montgomery Advertiser, November 23, 1894, quoting the Chicago Tribune.


24. Rogers, One-Gallussed Rebellion, 291 n. 105, Hackney, Populism To Progressivism, 68, and the Eufaula Times and News, November 29, 1894. Despite the grim attitude of the Democratic press, there were light moments in the wake of Kolb's announcement. The Mobile Register of December 1, 1894, for instance, copied the following bit of doggerel from the Anniston Hot Blast: "Reuben, Reuben! I've been thinking, /And I'll tell you for your health:/ When you start this bad blood-spilling, /Be sure and spill it from yourself." Some Democrats were by no means upset at the prospect of conflict. As early as October 2, W.C. Gates had observed: "If Kolb gets up a dual legislature, I suppose, in all probability, we will have some fun." See W.C. Gates to T.G. Jones, October 2, 1894, in Box 33, Official Governors' Papers.

25. Robert McKee to ? (draft), December 12, 1894, in the McKee Papers.

26. Ashland People's Party Advocate, October 12, November 23, 1894, J.C. Manning to the Des Moines Farmer's Tribune, November 26 1894, quoted in the Ashland People's Party Advocate, December 7, 1894, and Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 68, 71. Concerning W.S. Reese, Sr., see undated clipping, Atlanta Constitution (circa 1880's), in the Reese Family Folder #1, Biographical Files, Library, ADAH.

27. Owen, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, IV, 1422; see also the Reese Family Folder #1 for copious clippings pertaining to Reese's mayoralty. For Reese's involvement with the Citizens Alliance, see W.S. Reese to Joseph Wheeler, January 6, 1891, in the Wheeler Papers, and Rogers, One-Gallussed Rebellion, 195.

28. Senate Journal, 166-167. The House and Senate votes for Morgan were 61-35 and 23-9. For the quoted passage, see Manning, Fadeout, 35.
29. Montgomery Advertiser, December 1, 1894. Soon, Goodwyn would be referred to as "one of Kolb's heretofore strongest supporters." See ibid., December 12, 1894, quoting the Nashville Banner.

30. Montgomery Advertiser, December 1, 1894.

31. Ibid., and the House Journal, 226.

32. Montgomery Advertiser, December 2, 1894.

33. Ibid. The Advertiser puts the number of companies of militia at twenty-three. Hackney, taking his information from the Mobile Register, puts the number at twenty. Whichever figure is correct, over a thousand state troops were massed about the capitol building on December 1, not counting a special detachment of Montgomery policemen. See Hackney, Populism to Progressivism, 68-69, and Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 291-292.

34. Montgomery Advertiser, December 2, 1894, and the Butler Choctaw Herald, December 5, 1894. Also taking their oaths were J.C. Fonville as Secretary of State, W.T.B. Lynch as State Auditor, J.P. Oliver as State Superintendent of Education, and W.S. Reese, Jr., as Attorney General. Kolb's manner of assuming office had been predicted by Thomas Jones: "Possibly the defeated candidate may take the oath of office before a Justice of the Peace on inauguration day, and even go to the extent of issuing a proclamation as Governor. But this would . . . have as little effect as the doings of patients in insane hospitals, who imagine themselves crowned heads." See the Eufaula Times and News, November 29, 1894.

35. Montgomery Advertiser, December 2, 1894, and January 12, 1895, quoting the Decatur News; see also the House Journal, 242. According to the Decatur newspaper, Manning "did all in his power to discourage [Kolb's] performance on December 1st." At 10:00 A.M., Manning was in the House of Representatives introducing a bill; later, he may have become involved in an argument between Representative Ben Screws of Montgomery and several Populist members, in which Screws denied that the troops outside were there for the purpose of putting down a possible insurrection.

36. Montgomery Advertiser, December 2, 1894.

37. Ibid., and W.S. Reese, Jr., to J.C. Manning, December 2, 1927, in Manning, Fadeout, 142-144.

38. Montgomery Advertiser, December 2, 5, 1894, and the Columbiana Shelby Sentinel, December 6, 1894. On December 4 Kolb issued a "Proclamation," which was essentially an elaboration of his inaugural address. Several of the quoted passages are taken from that Proclamation. Interestingly, neither the Ashland People's Party Advocate nor the Butler Choctaw Alliance covered Kolb's
inauguration directly or commented upon it extensively. No copies of the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune are available for the period in question.


40. Butler Choctaw Herald, December 5, 1894.

41. Ashland People's Party Advocate, December 14, 1894, and the House Journal, 226, 242, 258. John had come to Birmingham from Dallas County in 1889. He had represented Dallas County in the legislature from 1882-1887. See the Memorial Record, II, 284.

42. Montgomery Advertiser, December 6, 1894, the Ashland People's Party Advocate, December 14, 1894, and the House Journal, 280. After Manning spoke, A.J. Hearn of Choctaw County proposed the creation of a bipartisan committee to investigate the August elections, with the power to go behind the returns. This counter-challenge was buried in the House Rules Committee.

43. Huntsville Tribune, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, December 16, 1894.

44. Montgomery Advertiser, December 14, 1894.

45. Ibid., December 12, 1894.

46. Butler Choctaw Herald, December 26, 1894, the Nashville Banner, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, December 12, 1894, and Decatur News, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, January 12, 1895.

47. Montgomery Advertiser, December 7, 1894, and the Butler Choctaw Herald, December 12, 1894. Kolb complied with the plan to the extent of giving W.S. Reese "credentials" for a seat in the U.S. Senate. Populist Senator William V. Allen of Nebraska subsequently made use of these "de jure" credentials in his efforts to promote a Senate investigation of Alabama politics. See the Montgomery Advertiser, February 2, 1895. In all probability, Manning revealed this abortive strategy to the press in order to preserve an appearance of unity within the People's Party.

48. Montgomery Advertiser, December 9, 1894, and December 12, 1894, quoting the Nashville Banner. See also the Choctaw Herald, December 26, 1894. For a time after the December 8 meeting Kolb and Goodwyn refused to speak to each other.


51. Montgomery Advertiser, November 11, 1894.

52. Hackney, Populism to Progressivism, xii-xiii, 72-74, 123-133. The "Progressive" faction of the Democracy had no firm existence in 1895. S.W. John, its leader, was primarily a legislative spokesman for Birmingham banker, silverite and gubernatorial candidate Joseph Forney Johnston. As such, John made numerous rhetorical stands on behalf of free silver, and received the support of Alabama's silverite journals—some of which, like J.R. Rogers' Opelika Industrial News, were strategically located in bustling young railroad and textile centers. Together with Anniston Representative K.B. Kelly, John was able to command the votes of between ten and thirty Democrats for his regulatory and inflationary proposals. Predictably, the extent of his influence depended upon the amount of pressure toward conformity applied by Speaker Thomas Clark and other Bourbon leaders.

53. House Journal, 32.

54. Ibid., 269.

55. Ibid., 321, 358, 371, and Senate Journal, 303, 305, 310-311. The same day, Representative E.J. Beasley of Covington County introduced a bill to "protect taxpayers from negligent, incompetent or corrupt officers." Beasley sought to insure clear-cut means of redress in case of partisan tax assessment; he believed that the time was "almost ripe when the people will rise up and hurl the usurpers from power." See the Montgomery Advertiser, December 9, 1894.

56. Montgomery Advertiser, November 27, 1894, quoting the Mobile Register, and the Opelika Industrial News, February 14, 1895.

57. Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 236.


60. Montgomery Advertiser, December 6, 1894. Also see below, Chapter VII.

61. Ashland People's Party Advocate, December 14, 1894, the Montgomery Advertiser, December 7, 1894, and the Birmingham Age Herald, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, December 9, 1894. Samford's bills authorized the State Auditor to draw up warrants in convenient denominations, and made such warrants legal tender for public debts in Alabama. For information on the Mississippi law, see Robert L. Brandon, Cotton Kingdom of the New South: A History of the Yazoo Mississippi Delta From Reconstruction to the Twentieth Century (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1967), 171-172.


63. Montgomery Advertiser, December 7, 1894.

64. Ibid., January 24, February 8, 1895, and the House Journal, 536 843, 873. The Kelly bill contained an excise tax on banking capital, and detailed provisions for determining the value of property owned by railroads and planters. See Going, Bourbon Democracy in Alabama, 99.

65. Montgomery Advertiser, December 13, 1894. During the preliminary debates over assessment, Populists were fighting the centralization of political power on several fronts. On December 12, for example, A.J. Hearn presented a protest signed by thirty-six Populist Representatives, against the exclusion of Choctaw County from House Bill 322, which allowed other counties to elect their own Superintendents of Education. Similarly on December 14, Nelson Fuller of Bibb County protested the passage of a measure which, contrary to the wishes of a majority of his constituents, had enlarged the powers of the Bibb County Commissioners' Court. The bill, said Fuller, was a travesty: "The victors having accomplished their vile ends gloat and laugh, while [my] county mourns and hangs its head in shame." See ibid., December 15, 1894.

67. Montgomery Advertiser, December 13, 1894.

68. House Journal, 892-894. Statements as to the perceptions and strategies of Manning, Kelly and John are based on the logic of subsequent events.

69. Ibid., 924.

70. Ibid., 925-927, and the Montgomery Advertiser, February 13, 1895.

71. House Journal, 942-943, 1031-1032, 1050-1053, 1077, and the Senate Journal, 752-753, 794, 815, 830, 851-852. In the House on February 13, the Populist vote against the resurrected Substitute was 0-28.


73. Raleigh, North Carolina, Caucasian, March 21, 28, 1895. For a contrasting view of Populist motivations, see Hackney, Populism To Progressivism, 48-77, and especially 71-73. Hackney treats the Populist vote against the Assessment Bill on February 12 as a sudden and complete reversal, not the end product of a trend of voting. Failing to perceive any reason why the Populists might have opposed the Kelly Bill, he accepts the verdict of the Mobile Register that they voted against the measure for purely "tactical reasons." To Hackney, therefore, the February 12 vote proves that the agrarians were not issue-oriented reformers, but victims of anomie and failure.

74. For information on the state of Alabama's bonded indebtedness, see the Montgomery Advertiser, March 29, December 18, 1695.


76. Ibid., 741, 887-888, 924, 1024, 1048, and the Senate Journal.

77. J.C. Manning to H.D. Lloyd, March 31, 1895, in the Lloyd Papers.

79. Edmund Morris, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, 1979), 483-486. The New York Reform League was an organizational vehicle for pooling the influence of several groups, including the Confederated Good Government Clubs, the City Vigilance League, the City Club of New York, and the German-American Reform Union. The president of the New York Reform League was a celebrated divine, Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church. Another prominent member was John W. Guiff, counsel of the anti-Tammany "Lexow Committee" of the State Senate. See the Montgomery Advertiser, December 21, 1894, February 5, March 8, 12, 1895, and the Raleigh Caucasian, March 14, 1895.

80. J.C. Manning to H.D. Lloyd, March 23, 1895, in the Lloyd Papers. By early December, 1894, Manning was heartened by the startling outcome of Georgia's Tenth District congressional race. After the votes were counted, Democratic winner James Black offered Populist Tom Watson a rematch. Manning believed that Black's action was necessitated by widespread publicity of electoral frauds in the district. For more information, see below.

81. Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise*, 477-478, the Ashland People's Party Advocate, January 25, 1895, and J.C. Manning to H.D. Lloyd, February 16, 1895, in the Lloyd Papers. Taubeneck had hoped that the meeting would vote down the "wild theories" of the Omaha Platform, but his conservative voice was drowned out by the protests of vehement and resentful Midreaders. Under the inspiration of Henry D. Lloyd of Illinois, as Manning observed, the conference proceeded to "make declarations on questions so vitally effecting [sic] the working people of the North that they might be attracted to . . . the People's Party." Specifically, the delegates expanded the Omaha Platform to include a strong endorsement of municipal ownership of utilities. Personally, Manning had no quarrels with the Straightouts, though he was convinced that the People's Party would have to fight a "great battle with the enemy at 'Free Silver Run.'" "The issue will be forced upon us," he told Lloyd, adding: "Of course, this does not mean that the other demands of our party must be repudiated, nor does it mean that they are of less importance." But if he had scant patience with the silverites after his experiences of 1893, he had little more for many of Lloyd's allies at St. Louis, whom he called "radicals and visionists, . . . wild and ranting fellows." Some of those who had opposed Taubeneck's silver platform, he believed, did so in order to promote panaceas of their own. Clearly, Manning's heart was not in the ideological debate which came to dominate the interior life of the Populist movement after December 1894.
62. In the Black Belt, such Populists as Gilbert H. Johnson of Dallas County were busily circulating petitions among thousands of black voters who were willing to swear that they had been robbed of their votes in the last election. Similarly, W.H. Skaggs ranged into machine-dominated Wilcox County to secure affidavits. Skaggs was joined at Selma by W.S. Reese, Sr., who had begun an expensive two years of traveling between Washington, D.C., and Alabama. Other Populists and Republicans engaged in collecting evidence included A.T. Goodwyn, T.H. Aldrich, W.F. Aldrich, P.C. Bowman, Lewis Parsons, R.A. Moses, and Joseph Manning. Undoubtedly, they turned up some picturesque material. John Washington and "Pegleg" Benson, for instance, were illiterate black poll watchers who had been paid for decades to overlook frauds committed against the Republican Party. Contacted by reformist lawyers, they decided to tell their stories. J.H. Van Pelt, on the other hand, was a white polling officer in Selma who testified that he had stuffed a ballot box with 135 ballots after only seven men had voted. His excuse consisted of the breezy remark that "All men are rascals on earth." Such was the material upon which Manning based his St. Louis speech, and upon which W.S. Reese, A.T. Goodwyn, and the Aldrich brothers based their contest cases. See the Montgomery Advertiser, December 29, 1894, January 23, February 5, 1895, the Raleigh Caucasian, January 3, 1895, the Ashland People's Party Advocate, January 25, 1895, the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, January 31, 1895, Muscat "Albert Taylor Goodwyn," 57-60, and the Congressional Record, 54th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 1, 30-32.


84. Raleigh Caucasian, January 3, 1895.

85. H.D. Lloyd to J.C. Manning, February 7, 1895, in the Lloyd Papers. Lloyd wrote: "If I were to tell you of the conditions under which the working people of the North lived and labored, you probably would not be able to believe it; but if I could have an opportunity to show it to you, you . . . would become possessed with the idea that no citizen of the United States could safely take his ease until such infamies were wiped out of existence." Lloyd subsequently provided Manning with introductions to reformers in Boston and Chicago. See below, Chapter VII.

86. Montgomery Advertiser, January 1, 1895.

88. Goodwyn, Democratic Promise, 335, and Carl Degler, The Other South, 333-334.

89. Ashland People's Party Advocate, February 22, 1895. Morgan, Burkitt, and Davis also agreed to serve as officers in the Southern Ballot Rights League (hereinafter cited as SBRL). Ultimately, they were too absorbed in their fight against the silverites to be of any help to Manning. For information on Baitzell's short-lived Jacksonville People's Journal, see Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 257.

90. Raleigh Caucasian, January 10, 1895.

91. Ibid., May 10, 1895. During Theodore Roosevelt's first administration, Pritchard became a spokesman for Lily-White Republicans in North Carolina and Alabama, but as late as 1899 he was still battling Senator John Tyler Morgan over the question of suffrage restriction in the South. See Richard S. Sherman, The Republican Party and Black America: From McKinley to Hoover, 1896-1933 (Charlottesville, Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 1973), 16, 32-34.

92. See J.C. Manning to H.D. Lloyd, February 16, March 31, 1895, in the Lloyd Papers. Like Manning, Lloyd was torn between the temptation to embrace short-cuts to political victory and a deep desire to maintain the integrity of the People's Party. For all his oratory in 1894-1895, Lloyd accepted fusion with the Bryan Democracy in 1896. See Poliack, Populist Response To Industrial America, 104-105, 135-137.

93. New Orleans Daily Picayune, January 19, 1895, and the Opelika Industrial News, June 13, December 12, 1895. Greer came to New Orleans himself, and Hood sent a young editor named Sullivan. The Ashland People's Party Advocate, January 25, 1895, quotes the Montgomery Journal: "that men of reputation like J.C. Manning . . . are interested in the cause of a fair ballot and an honest count is evidence that leaders of all political parties are determined to agitate this question." Hood, Greer, and J.R. Rogers of the Industrial News were supporters of the silverite gubernatorial candidate, J.F. Johnston of Birmingham.

94. Montgomery Advertiser, January 22, March 20, 21, 29, 1895. Not only had the Constitution supported New York Senator David B. Hill over Grover Cleveland for the Democratic nomination in 1892, but the Georgia daily subsequently urged the repudiation of Cleveland's bond issues.

95. Montgomery Advertiser, January 18, 20, 1895, the Ashland People's Party Advocate, February 22, 1895, and the Raleigh Caucasian, March 28, 1895. For information concerning Colyar and Royall, see Woodward, Origins of the New South, 21, 78. For evidence of a non-partisan ballot rights conference in Arkansas, see Manning, Fadeout, 56.

97. *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, January 17, 1895. Finally, Manning was able to secure a downstairs lecture room in the "Washington Artillery Hall."


100. *Ashland People's Party Advocate*, February 1, 1895. Manning's chief source was the anti-fraud Democratic sheet, the *Huntsville Tribune*.


104. *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, January 19, 1895. Speaking at Cleveland, Ohio, the following May, Manning made his point somewhat differently: "Ballot reform will break the Solid South. It will help solve the race question of dividing the negro vote." See the *Ashland People's Party Advocate*, June 14, 1895. In general, Manning agreed with M.W. Howard, who told the morning session of the SBRL convention that "a majority of the whites . . . and 95 per cent of the negroes" opposed the Democratic regime in Alabama. Both men looked forward, with more than a hint of condescension, to that day when black men could cast honest votes on behalf of a white-dominated People's Party. See Harris, "The Political Career of Milford W. Howard," 64-66, for a discussion of Howard's activities in the SBRL.

105. *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, January 19, 1895. Manning would return to this theme again and again.

106. *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, January 19, 1895 and the *Ashland People's Party Advocate*, February 22, 1895. SBRL officers were either Executive Committeemen or Vice Presidents. The Executive Committeemen were Lewis Parsons of Birmingham, Alabama, Thomas Fletcher of Little Rock, Arkansas, Walter Denegre of New Orleans, Louisiana, A.S. Colyar of Nashville, Tennessee, Frank Burkitt of Okolona, Mississippi, William L. Royall of Richmond, Virginia, Marion Butler of Raleigh, North Carolina, Clark Howall of Atlanta, Georgia, J.J. Evans of Columbia, South Carolina, and J.H. Davis
of Sulphur Springs, Texas. The Vice Presidents were G.B. Deans of Calera, Alabama, T.S. Adams of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, W.S. Morgan of Hardy, Arkansas, Samuel L. Dodd of Kosciusko, Mississippi, Jeter Pritchard of Raleigh, North Carolina, James J. Hinds of Atlanta, Georgia, and John Regan of Palestine, Texas. Prominent convention delegates included Frank Baltzell, Lewis Parsons, and G.B. Deans of Alabama; Thomas Fletcher, SBRL officer and non-partisan reformer from Arkansas; and Walter Denegre, T.S. Adams, and W.S. Parkerson, Ballot Reform Leaguers from New Orleans. Louis Fruehling of the Louisiana Knights of Labor attended the convention, but no delegates from the Louisiana People's Party were mentioned in newspaper accounts.


108. Ibid. The "disfranchiser" was B.R. Forman, quoted above.

109. *New York Tribune*, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, December 21, 29, 1894, January 23, 1895. Tribune editor Whitelaw Reid had launched his own investigation of electoral affairs in Alabama through a special correspondent, John Ford, who interviewed W.C. Oates, R.A. Moseley, R.F. Kolb, and others. Ford was favorably impressed with Kolb, but was disturbed by the "Governor's" incendiary public statements. See two Tribune articles quoted in the Raleigh Caucasian, January 31, 1895, and the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, April 25, 1895. In the latter, the Tribune writer made the revealing observation that electoral reform would be "the best business investment that could be made by the Southern states."

110. J.C. Manning to H.D. Lloyd, March 31, 1895, in the Lloyd Papers. Manning had alluded briefly to the Black-Watson race in his New Orleans speech, but had made no other recorded public or private reference to the matter before writing Lloyd. Manning wrote five letters to Lloyd in early 1895, from Montgomery and New York, most of them brimming over with optimism concerning the rise of anti-Bourbon sentiment in the North. For a less optimistic view of the motives behind the Black-Watson rematch, see Woodward, *Tom Watson*, 271-272.

111. J.C. Manning to H.D. Lloyd, March 5, 1895, in the Lloyd Papers, and the Ashland People's Party Advocate, March 15, 1895.

112. It is clear that Manning was prepared for Democratic criticism of his ballot rights activities. When the legislature reconvened, Representative J.T. Dale of Wilcox County offered a resolution of censure, in which he indirectly condemned Manning and boasted that the Democratic Party had been a bulwark of integrity ever since "the people in their might under a Democratic flag wrested [the state] from the hands of the carpetbaggers." Manning rose to a point of personal privilege and replied with controlled fury
and tactical brilliance. To the "true Democracy" of the Reconstruction era, he gave "a garland of glory." But the fight against machine domination, he reminded the House, had not ended with the election of George Smith Houston as governor in 1874. Corruption in Alabama was still so unbearable that "the same men who followed immortal Houston to reclaim Alabama from carpetbag rule" were now "with the common people in their grand movement to save the state from ballot box stuffers."

Having stood one of the great Democratic myths on its head, Manning offered to prove his statements with sworn affidavits from Wilcox and other counties. House Democrats hastily ruled him out of order. The Dale Resolution was buried in committee. See the House Journal, 523, and the Ashland People's Party Advocate, February 1, 1895.

113. Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune, January 24, 1895, quoted in the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, January 31, 1895. The Eufaula Times and News, January 31, 1895, predicted that "Captain Kolb will not head the next populist ticket in Alabama . . . And he won't even support the ticket, . . . [we] guess." See also the Decatur News, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, January 12, 1895.


115. Ibid., 677, 699, 805, 846, and the House Journal, 623, 908, 939, 1004, 1058. Ream voted against the measure, he said, because it required contestants to post a $5000 bond.

116. Montgomery Advertiser, February 16, 1895.

117. Ibid., February 23, 1895, and the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, March 7, 1895.

118. Montgomery Advertiser, March 14, 1895.

119. Ozark Banner-Advertiser, March 21, 28, 1895. On March 12, Kolb issued yet another statement. This final proclamation was an emphatic summary of Kolb's grievances, but it stopped well short of promoting revolution.

120. Raleigh Daily Caucasian, March 13, 1895, quoting the Nashville Banner.
CHAPTER VII

FIREWORKS ABROAD AND AT HOME:
THE SURVIVAL OF THE CONGRESSIONAL STRATEGY

Joseph Manning arrived in New York City on March 17, 1895, in a mood of determined optimism. At home, most Populist leaders were anxious to put the Congressional Strategy to the test, and the troublesome question of whether reformers should resort to violence seemed to have been laid to rest. Manning's optimistic spirit was reflected in his choice of Congressman-elect M.W. Howard as a traveling companion. Howard, who had often visited New York during an earlier career as a paid lecturer, was a passionate convert to fiat-money Populism, and was well-known as the author of the melodramatic novel *If Christ Came to Congress*. Like Manning, the new representative from the "Bloody Seventh" District believed that the United States was ruled by a series of allied oligarchies. His sympathies were with the "thousands who go down inarticulate into the depths, ... carrying about with them ... the bitter ashes of a life from which the furnace of misfortune has burnt away all hope, joy, and strength." To Dr. Parkhurst and the genteel chiefs of the New York Reform League, Manning and Howard were likely to appear to be Populist wildmen from the South. And yet, these young men were imbued with convictions, and with a refreshingly naive faith in the power of moral suasion. Such qualities helped insure that they would be heard.
Manning's arrival coincided, probably by design, with the presence in New York of William C. Oates. The redoubtable Governor was in town to pay the interest on a number of Alabama loans and to persuade the holders of the state's bonded indebtedness to accept a "refunding issue." Manning and Howard were confident that he would be less formidable on neutral ground than on Goat Hill, surrounded by troops. The two Populists, moreover, carried with them a powerful weapon in the form of an authenticated story concerning one of Oates' prominent supporters, Montgomery County Probate Judge F.C. Randolph. As early as November of 1894, State Auditor John Purifoy had revealed to Governor Thomas Jones that Randolph was badly in arrears in his accounts. An investigation ordered by Oates in February indicated that the long-time political boss of Montgomery County owed the state more than $27,000. Though Randolph was a man of unstable temperament, Jones and Oates had privately agreed that there had been no "moral turpitude" in his conduct, and offered him time to make good the default. As the facts of the case began to circulate in Alabama, even the Judge's friends concluded that his timing could not have been worse. Reformers charged, correctly enough, that Randolph was preparing to flee the state. From the standpoint of Joseph Manning, the Oates-Randolph connection made a tale worth telling.

Oates' mission to New York fit in perfectly with Manning's determination both to damage the Bourbon regime's financial credibility and to "reach the nation through the metropolitan press." Excited at the prospect before them, Manning and Howard made public the first of several controversial manifestoes on March 18. As they had hoped,
the story was printed in the New York dailies and copied by newspapers across the East and South. W.C. Oates, said his young antagonists, was a "de facto" official whose election was repudiated by "a great majority of the people of Alabama." The financial program enacted by the Democratic legislature was merely a ruinous and heartless expedient intended "to save the state from another impending bankruptcy." "If such conditions make [for] the good credit of a state," Joseph and his partner rather pompously concluded, "then it may exist for Alabama, [though] businessmen will deem it otherwise." Having struck one blow at the enemy, Manning discussed other aspects of his journey with a reporter from the New York Record. Announcing that he planned to consult with Dr. Parkhurst, City Recorder John Goff, and Mayor William Strong, the Alabamian projected a mammoth ballot reform rally at Cooper Union. If enough support could be drummed up among the non-partisan leagues of the North, he added optimistically, "an effort will be made to secure a uniform ballot law for" Alabama, Louisiana, Georgia, Texas, Arkansas, and other troubled states. In the eyes of its founder, certainly, the Southern Ballot Rights League was far from defunct.

On March 19, Manning and Howard showed their Populist colors in a second press release. In retrospect, it is clear that they were fascinated with the complexities of a situation in which the "fraudocrat" Oates could prop up his government with money from the predatory capitalists of Wall Street. They utterly disapproved of the ties of mutual aggrandisement and dependence which connected the Governor and his creditors. Such ties, moreover, were plainly part of the nature of everyday transactions in the nation's financial capital. Manning, who
was to some extent under the tutelage of the radical greenbacker Howard, was distressed by what he saw of commercial life, and the result was an unguarded sarcasm concerning the "new and unique role" played by "Alabama's de facto Governor":

Usually people come to New York City to get bunkoed. Now Colonel Oates is here endeavoring to bunko the financiers of Wall Street into purchasing Alabama bonds, when there is each year a growing deficit in the State Treasury, and when it is with difficulty that the people are restrained from open rebellion.

Next, Manning and Howard told the story of F.C. Randolph, leaving out the names involved but drawing a nice moral for the bunko artists in the great banking institutions:

County officers, who handle the state revenue, have been retained in office and protected from prosecution after it is a matter of public report that they are defaulters of public funds. Thus it is evident that those whose way into office is stolen by prostituting the ballot box cannot be trusted with the custody of the people's money. Hence the great demand for ballot reform in the South.7

Manning was able to assume a somewhat different tone, however, in a March 19 interview printed in the Republican New York Tribune. Noting that he was "exceedingly gratified" by the reception he had received in New York, he described himself as the leader of a representative movement of Southerners opposed to the "ancient regime" of Democratic "mossbacks." Sounding for all the world like a Populist Henry Grady, Manning accurately discussed the political, economic, and social revolution desired by most of his constituents:

A new South has arisen, a South that is made up of young, progressive and wide-awake men . . . Now we have got to get a new regime in office, new blood, new brains; got to change the whole system and the whole spirit of the South. And the first step is to
secure a free ballot and a fair count, . . . for
a fraudulent vote for a congressman in Alabama injures
you in New York just as it does us in the South.

It was the goal of the Southern Ballot Rights League, he said, to "make
contests, or organize a campaign of education . . . to secure proper
election and contest laws." His personal desire was to "smash the
oligarchy by peaceful, lawful means." Yet lest he sound too much like
a revolutionary, Manning hastened to point out that "since 1878, a
republican form of government has not existed in the state of
Alabama, or in many states of the South." The carpetbagger excesses
which once served to justify Bourbon practices, he maintained, have
"now disappeared, and the crimes against suffrage today are committed
against the intelligence and best sentiment of the South." 8

It is difficult to tell what effect such articles may have had
upon Oates' financial dealings. At the time the interviews appeared, the
Governor was discovering that New York investors were unwilling to
exchange old bonds for new. This may have been in part because, as the
Montgomery Advertiser claimed, the older issues were selling at seven
to nine points above par. Nonetheless Oates failed to refund Alabama's
debt, and within a few days he was back home in a poor state of health
and nerves. 9 In New York, meanwhile, Manning and Howard had come to an
amicable parting of the ways. The latter decided to devote himself to
a study of political economy which he subsequently published as The
American Plutocracy. Manning, for his part, remained to deal with
criticisms and questions raised by his latest approach to ballot reform.
For by the standards of angry Bourbons and middle-class intellectuals
alike, he had begun his work in a remarkable manner.  

To Joseph Manning, the public statements of March 18 and 19 were largely dramatic means to a worthy end. The Clay Countian had wanted, as he modestly put it, to "exhibit the real character" of Democratic government to the financiers of New York, and to the nation. Judging by the avalanche of defensive over-reaction touched off by the Manning-Howard exposes, he was largely successful. Well into April, the Montgomery Advertiser and its allies waged a campaign of slander based thinly on the charge that Manning, in particular, was a traitorous legislator anxious to "befoul [his] own nest" and destroy the credit of his state. The accusation contained more than a grain of truth, but the hysterical mood which prevailed in the administration press indicates that the Democratic writers perceived a threat to a system of political control and a way of life which they held dear. "The mind falls back abashed," confessed the arch-conservative editor of the Evergreen Conecuh Record, "in contemplation of . . . the malignity of Messrs. Howard and Manning, who with pens steeped in the hellish dyes of conscienceless lives, endeavored to blot the fair name of their native state." In an alliterative mood, the editor of the Tuscumbia North Alabamian observed that "of all the dirty, leprous lazzaroni thrown to the surface in political campaigns, the foulest and most contemptible are J.C. Manning, the pet of the Alabama Populists, and M.W. Howard, the blasphemous brute." The Tuscaloosa Times described Manning and his friend as "reckless prevaricators" to be viewed with "loathing"; the Bessemer Journal made its own alliterative reference to Alabama's "pestilential pair of polecats." The most revealing comment, however,
came from the Chatanooga, Tennessee, Times, whose editor feared for the "reversal" of "the whole moral, if not the whole physical fabric" of the South if Manning were not stopped. 13

Joseph was delighted with the Southern reaction to his pronouncements, and in a letter to the Ashland People's Party Advocate he frankly taunted his detractors. "It is not my having 'befouled' my own nest that bothers them," he remarked. Rather, the ballot-stuffers were troubled "because I am holding up the whole roost and letting the breeze of public opinion whistle through the Bourbons' whiskers." Oates' supporters could expect more of the same, said the young orator, adding that he was "not half-done stirring up the animals" in Montgomery. 14 But in the midst of his jubilation, Manning was faced with the desertion of important backers in the South. By March 23, Clark Howell of the Atlanta Constitution, R.A. Moseley of the Birmingham Times and the Republican Party of Alabama, and the officers of the New Orleans Ballot Reform League had formally disassociated themselves from the Southern Ballot Rights League. Horrified by Manning's willingness to disrupt relations between Wall Street and Alabama's government, Howell spoke for the Southern middle classes when he predicted that the movement for political honesty "will be injured rather than aided by . . . those who have taken this worthy cause as the cloak of their crusade against the good name of their own state." 15 At the same time, Manning learned that his speeches and writings had disturbed Whitelaw Reid of the New York Tribune, a powerful ally of the Northern reform leagues. Reid, who shared the suspicions of many urban reformers with regard to universal manhood suffrage, was likewise skeptical of Manning's claim that an enlightened
majority of Southern farmers had rejected sectionalistic politics. The famous editor was an advocate of gently educating Southern planters and businessmen upon the "comprehensive national policies" of the Republican Party, and he was certain that the president of the Southern Ballot Rights League had made a "serious miscalculation" of the temper of the region. "If lectures are read to [Southerners] in a high key from Cooper Union," Reid affirmed, "their hearts will be hardened and their reformatory impulses . . . will be paralyzed by sectional resentment." 16

For a time Manning was surprisingly undisturbed by the retreat of such prestigious but faint-hearted friends. In the first place, his reputation for veracity was speedily established by the flight to Mexico of F.C. Randolph in late March. The event confounded the Democratic editors of Alabama and forced Thomas Jones and W.C. Oates into a controversy more embarrassing than the original financial difficulties of the state government. 17 Second, and more important, Manning was encouraged by the sheer volume of publicity his cause had received; he truly believed that he was on the verge of a journalistic triumph comparable to that achieved by Tom Watson in Georgia's Tenth District a few months earlier. In this frame of mind, the ebullient Alabamian was able to persuade himself that he could win Northern approval for a pacific but thorough-going revolution. "My Eastern agitation," he told Henry Demarest Lloyd, "will convince those who want to see a real change in the South that my course is . . . the one to bring it about." His approach, he hoped, would appeal ultimately to all reasonable men. "It is first to tear down, then build up. Expose and destroy the oligarchies, ruin their credit and denounce their . . . methods; [that]
is the patriotic and practical way to restore good government."

To an extent, Manning's optimism was justified. During the weeks he spent in the metropolis, he conferred with Charles Parkhurst, John Inman, John Goff, and other civic officials and leaders of the New York Reform League. These individuals were preoccupied with two "Police Reform" bills currently before the state legislature, but nevertheless they began introducing the young Populist to men of wealth and goodwill. Eventually, Manning's contacts expanded to include Elihu Root, General Horace Porter, Cornelius N. Bliss, General James S. Clarkson, Charles Emory Smith, and Charles H. Denison. In addition, though the New Yorkers were unwilling to stage a Cooper Union rally for the Southern Ballot Rights League, they saw to it that Manning was invited to address the City Republican Club on April 15. And yet Joseph was not entirely satisfied. While his new friends were prepared to support him in town for as long as he cared to stay, he feared that they would not provide him with sufficient money to mount an effective lobbying campaign. As early as March 23, he experienced a depressing sense of marking time. On that date he wrote H.D. Lloyd: "I must continue my work of . . . gathering startling evidence of corruption," adding that

To do this and to keep it circulated is my great hope and aim, . . . [but] I must have financial aid to go on with the work. A little money, used as I am now working, will do more good than all that could be done by a heated political campaign.

Manning was also faced with mounting indications that the political power of the New York Reform League was not so great as he had imagined. It was widely known in the city, for example, that Thomas C. Platt,
Republican boss of the state, had withdrawn from Dr. Parkhurst's Madison Square church in resentment over the manner in which the celebrated divine excoriated "practical politicians." Republican U.S. Senator Chauncey Depew kept his temper, but like Platt he had little regard for reformers of any stripe. Questioned about the Manning-Howard interviews after his return from a trip to the South, Depew replied: "I do not quite catch the drift of their aim... I hear no murmur of discontent concerning the ballot system." A staunch conservative nationally known as New York's "railroad Senator," Depew was typical of the Republicans and Democrats who "represented" great economic units or aggregations of capital in Washington, D.C., in the 1890's.21

Manning tried to counter the prevailing laissez-faire attitude of Northerners toward Southern affairs by insisting that the overthrow of Democratic regimes would be both just and, in the long run, good for business. To an earnest and nationalistic Populist, it seemed incredible that the South, with its abundant resources, had not taken its rightful place in a prosperous and diversified economy. "I have seen the great West built up and people go to the sand hills of Kansas," Manning bitterly told one reporter, "rather than invest in Alabama."22 The explanation for this riddle, he continued, lay in the facility with which a minority class of oligarchs had been able to preserve, through legislation, masterful rhetoric, and force, a "Solid South" closed to all loyalties save those of the Lost Cause and White Supremacy, and to all economic activity save that of planting cotton. Times were changing, he again maintained, but it was not
an easy fight:

The Bourbon leaders have tried to create and control a public sentiment which seeks to make it a disgrace, [as it] is criminal in their eyes, to be a Republican, a Populist, or anything but what they prescribe. They count themselves into office, and say I am a slanderer and traitor to my state for telling it on them, and for telling how the state has suffered from their domination.23

Not until after his speech before the City Republican Club, in mid-April, did Manning feel confident that he had secured a base of friendship and welcome in New York City. Elihu Root had presided at the meeting, and the membership had roared with laughter at Manning's rendition of a folksy anecdote in which the Devil himself expressed the fear that if "the Cleveland Congress" could roam at will in his dominions, "they would soon have hell in a worse fix than the United States."24 Joseph was grateful for the applause, evident kindly feelings, and financial assistance of these Republicans, but he knew that his task of education was only beginning. For some time he had been collecting letters of introduction to reform-minded philanthropists and politicians in Chicago, Boston, Cleveland, and Philadelphia. Now he was prepared to take his cause into these broader fields of activity.25

For approximately a year after his New York adventure, Joseph Manning's life was that of a commuter between Populist conferences in Alabama, and Republican and reform coteries in Washington, D.C., and points north. As an integral part of his ballot rights work, he was directly involved in pushing the Alabama and other Southern congressional
In November of 1895 a writer in the Montgomery Journal observed that Manning "has taken a pride in this work," and it was true that he scheduled his touring so that he would be able to confer with Speaker Thomas B. Reed, Senator W.E. Chandler, and other Republican officials. Many of the leading Alabama Populists traveled widely during 1895-1896; W.H. Skaggs publicized the Alabama frauds in Chicago and W.S. Reese made repeated trips to Washington, D.C., while Reuben Kolb spoke or gave interviews in New York, St. Louis, and Canton, Ohio. Manning, however, outdid them all. He was able to attract so much publicity while filling a variety of engagements that J.M. Whitehead referred to him in the Greenville Living Truth as a "pyrotechnic dispenser of vivid interviews with . . . reporters who run him down and force out opinions by the mile, and take his pictures . . . sitting, standing, speaking, gesticulating and spreading himself promiscuously." But if his Populist and Democratic critics jibed at Joseph for taking obvious relish in what he was doing, they knew that he was spreading a message rarely heard from a native Southerner.

A good example of Manning's educational work can be found in an interview he gave to the Republican press of Cleveland, Ohio, while attending the May 29, 1895, convention of the National Municipal League. Despite the presence of the Eastern Cowboy Theodore Roosevelt on the speaker's stand, Manning calculated that most of the delegates were middle-class businessmen. Therefore he specially emphasized the fact that the liberty and prosperity of the South, or of any region of the country, were closely tied together. "So long as the fundamental right
of a free ballot and fair count is denied the people," he warned, "immigration shuns the Southern states, capital drifts in other directions, and industrial progress is impossible." At the same time, the young Populist provided his readers with a class-oriented interpretation of political and economic events. "Ballot reform," he insisted, "will break the Solid South" by undermining the power of the oligarchs who have ruled by fraud and by hypocritical appeals to the racism of white voters. "The very Bourbons," he concluded, "who a few years ago practically enacted the death penalty should a negro vote, are now counting themselves in" with stuffed black ballots. As was often the case when Manning appealed to Republican and urban audiences, his Cleveland remarks were a striking combination of radical egalitarianism and what he called the "practical politics" of reform.

Sometimes, though, Manning relied entirely upon the higher patriotism and civic decency of would-be supporters. This was particularly true of his address before the Union League of Philadelphia on January 11, 1896. Joseph had worked with Philadelphian Charles Emory Smith and other friends to secure an invitation from this influential body at a time when the Southern contest cases were just coming before the Fifty-fourth Congress; he was determined to make every word count. "It is not an instantaneous or impulsive uprising that has swept these states against ballot box stuffers and Bourbons," he said, "but it is the result of the growth of a healthful public sentiment that is right." Repeating what he had said on countless occasions, he further declared that "the election frauds once committed to protect Alabama, it was alleged," from "carpet-baggers and blacks, have now come to be employed to maintain in office
a corrupt and truculent minority, opposed alike by a majority of whites and blacks." After further discussion of Bourbon political and educational repressions, Manning laid bare his convictions in a statement which may be taken to represent the moral pith of his two years' work. The fight for civil liberties, he said, is the "true issue" before the country:

No American, no patriot, no Southerner, can afford to throw himself across the pathway of this movement. The people of the Republic owe it to themselves to keep in mind the question of whether or not we shall have a republican form of government. I am sure you will not foil us in seeking to destroy this form of ballot box-stuffing slavery and protect to [sic] every citizen, however humble, the right to a voice in the perpetuity of American institutions. 31

In the summer of 1895 Manning briefly interrupted the task of mobilizing Northern sentiment and inaugurated a curious and abortive episode of his personal and political life. In late June or early July, Joseph and a pregnant Zoe left Ashland and moved to a rented house in Opelika, a growing railroad and textile center and the county seat of Lee County. The transfer of residence, made without fanfare, represented a spreading out of Populist talent into the eastern reaches of Alabama's Black Belt, an area which was relatively "poor" in assertive agrarian leaders. It is probable that Manning came to Opelika hoping to found Lee County's first Populist newspaper—editor J.R. Rogers of the Industrial News hinted as much. It is even possible that Manning was hoping to run for Congress in 1896 from the third district, of which Lee County was a part. Democratic
congressional candidates had carried the district in 1892 and 1894 with little effective opposition from local Jeffersonians. Whatever his plans may have been, his duties in the North and around the state left him no time to establish a reformist journal or build up local political momentum. Significantly, Joseph's memoirs contain no reference to Opelika or to his work there, doubtless because he never spent more than a week at a time in town. By July 1895, indeed, just as he was in the process of leaving the relative political safety of Clay County, renewed factional dissentsions of a serious nature were threatening the state People's Party, and absorbing his energies and attention.

From November 1894 to March 1895, Reuben Kolb had seen his rivals within the People's Party combine to out-maneuver and stifle him in the name of the Congressional Strategy. The ex-Jeffersonian chief was resentful, perhaps naturally so. In the words of the Eufaula Times and News, he had "fought . . . early and late and given to the cause much of its strength." Soon he began to seek for means with which to regain control of the reform movement in Alabama. Ever the astute politician, Kolb thought he saw such an opportunity in the rapid growth of free silver sentiment. Under the direction of Birmingham banker and Democratic gubernatorial candidate Joseph Forney Johnston and "Progressive" Democrat S.W. John, a network of county Silver Leagues was spreading from North Alabama southward, while a well-financed daily, the Birmingham State, was already locked in editorial combat with the conservative Montgomery Advertiser. In order to secure his own place among the proponents of the white metal, Kolb
traveled to Canton, Ohio, in March 1895, to confer with officials of General A.J. Warner's American Bimetallic League. Subsequently he associated himself with the presidential candidacy of former Pennsylvania Congressman Joseph Sibley, whose campaign was financed by the silver lobby. Kolb and his lieutenants also sent out feelers at home, and by late spring rumors were circulating to the effect that a large number of Alabama Populists would be willing to fuse with the Johnston Democracy in 1896. \(^{35}\)

To complicate matters further, Kolb was at the same time feuding with GOP boss R.A. Moseley, who had recently and theatrically declared his independence of the People's Party. Moseley, for his part, was under pressure from the supporters of one William Vaughn, an ambitious Birmingham Republican who favored a straight GOP ticket in all elections. Vaughn was a protégé of Republican king-maker Mark Hanna, and an advocate of the gold standard, whereas Moseley and his lieutenants had judiciously ignored the inflationist stance of their Populist allies. Moseley's announcement was thus a defensive reaction, an effort to show that he could maintain a firm party line. To Kolb it sounded like a "double-cross" in the making.

In June 1895, the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune sent a circular letter to twenty or more Populist leaders, asking their "opinion of merging the party with one of [the] two principal party organizations in the [next] state elections." The question was intentionally open-ended, and yet if Kolb hoped that the Tribune circular would stimulate a great outpouring of support for the silver wing of the Democratic Party, he was disappointed. Most of his
correspondents insisted that the People's Party must keep its identity, and stated that any discussion of "fusion," however defined, was premature. 37 Samuel M. Adams and Joseph Manning, moreover, attempted to establish a basis for continuing negotiations between Populists and Republicans by carefully substituting the term "cooperation" for "fusion." Realizing that Populists would resent any surrender of principle to potentially goldbug Republicans, Manning tried to steer his fellow-reformers away from "the present heated agitation of the currency question," which he believed was an issue "on which the people may divide" safely. Instead, he sought to remind the silverites of "the priceless value of civil liberty, and that it is more to be prized than ... silver or gold." He was convinced that political conditions in Alabama were such that People's Party men and Republicans must work together, despite differences in point of view and ideology, to defeat the "fraudocrats." Nor did Manning doubt that he, better than Kolb, could balance principle and necessity:

Cooperation ... is not fusion. The fact that Republicans like [Lewis] Parsons and Mosely ... have voted with the Populists in recent elections in Alabama does not make them any the less Republicans. The fact that Populists in the Fourth and Ninth Congressional Districts have voted with the Republicans does not make them any the less Populists. Should the Populists of Alabama cooperate with the Republicans in 1896 in a contest for honest elections, ... such a cooperation would assume the phase of a movement, and if this is not the time for a movement of patriotic men, ... the time will never be presented. 38

Kolb was temporarily set back, but he quickly hit upon a new tactic. For months to come, his People's Weekly Tribune worked to make hostility to the Republican Party and support for free silver the twin
determinants of Populist orthodoxy in Alabama. Tribune editor J.W. DuBose was aided in this task by the attitudes of several self-styled "Midroaders," including J.M. Whitehead and Philander Morgan, who had never fully accepted the presence of Republicans on the reformist congressional slate in 1894. Now the same intransigents feared that the strategy adopted by the dominant Manning-Goodwyn faction would leave them, as a disgruntled Clay Countian put it, "unmistakably affiliated with the Republican Party" in a presidential election year. DuBose's efforts were to a degree successful by July 24, when Manning, Kolb, Baltzell, Goodwyn, Adams, Whitehead, and other members of the Populist executive committee met in Birmingham and adopted a set of resolutions agreeable to both the emerging Antifusionist (i.e., anti-Republican) and Cooperationist groups. In 1896, declared the committee, nominations for state office would be made "without regard to past political differences, providing that (the nominees) are with us on the money question and (desire) fair elections." Notwithstanding the work of peacemakers, the People's Weekly Tribune claimed a victory and A.T. Goodwyn's Wetumpka Reform Advocate furiously accused Kolb and DuBose of having tried to disrupt the ranks of the reformers. The resulting quarrel stimulated further discussion among agrarians, many of whom were forced to reconcile approval of the congressional contests with opposition to anything that smacked of "fusion." From August through October, the readers of the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, Ashland People's Party Advocate, Butler Choctaw Alliance, and other weeklies continued to debate the terms upon which a future Populist-Republican coalition should be arranged.
Viewed in perspective, the controversy seems to have gained in intensity what it lacked in logical application. Even those partisans who described the Republican bosses as "selfish place-hunters" and goldbug "mossbacks" were willing to make startling concessions in order to retain the vote of the "Radical" rank-and-file. Conversely, though an approximately equal number of writers lauded the "patriots" of the GOP, most of the Cooperationists expected the Republican Party organization to occupy a subordinate place in the reform movement. There was often little practical difference between the arguments advanced by the two sides. Thus J.M. Whitehead, a vocal Antifusionist, announced that he would approve of placing "two or three clean, competent, respectable Republicans" upon a cooperation slate, if the GOP "would show a disposition to acquiesce" in the next Populist platform. And S.M. Adams, a stern Cooperationist, argued that it was the "duty" of Republicans to "vote the straight Populist ticket, for the reason that they cannot hope to have their votes counted in any other manner." But beyond the patronizing rhetoric and rival ambitions of Antifusionist and Cooperationist spokesmen, many Populists were disturbed, if undecided, over the prospect of another alliance with Republican politicians. Some agrarians doubtless retained the sectional prejudices common to Jeffersonian and Organized Democrats. Others wanted to recapture the spirit of 1892, when in the words of one obscure reformer, "one of the chief elements of strength in the People's Party was its hostility to old-party leaders." Yet the Alabama People's Party had never been remarkable for its ideological sophistication or consistency. Until recently, events had drawn the
party of the Subtreasury and the party of the Force Bill closer together, not the reverse. In 1895, Antifusionists had reason to resent what they saw as the Cooperationist tendency to make a virtue out of political necessity, but only a few individuals among the more visible Third Party men were Midroaders in the accepted sense of the word. There were, however, exceptions to the rule, and one such individual elicited an important statement of Cooperationist principles from Joseph Manning.

As the factional wars continued, Manning grew alarmed for his educational and congressional project, both of which were nearing the point of fruition or failure. He knew that several, perhaps a majority of the reformist editors were pushing Antifusionist dividends and neglecting the ballot rights issue. He was particularly interested, though, to discover through correspondence that E.M. Johnson of the Ozark Banner-Advertiser was prepared to go even further than the Kolbites in criticizing Cooperation. Ultimately, the "Wiregrass" editor would maintain that "no political party can have any permanency where . . . trades are resorted to get possession of public office; no party can be beneficial to the best interest of the people that [sic] adds to or takes from one jot or title of its national platform." The words touched something in Manning, who had made his first reputation as a Straightout. Nonetheless, under the present circumstances he thought that Johnson's words were perversely naive. The exigencies of the struggle for political survival, he believed, overrode the sanctity of the Omaha Platform. After sending a letter complimenting the fiery Midroader on his forthright sincerity, therefore, he
utilized a brief stay in Opelika to compose a longer message, an essay, which appeared in the Banner-Advertiser on September 26.47

First, Manning wished to remind all right-minded Alabamians that just a year earlier, "a handful of men whipped the Tammany tiger in New York." In the process, he observed, "those who made his fight had difficulties . . . to which Alabama reformers are not strangers," difficulties such as widespread ballot box stuffing, machine voting, violence, and disregard for the law. Yet the fight was gloriously won through a coalition among "Republicans, anti-Tammany Democrats, and all who believed in honest city government." The situation had been basically the same, he continued, in North Carolina. There it had been easy for "the Bourbons and ballot box stuffers" to count out Populists and Republicans, so long as "these two armies . . . came at the Bourbons divided." After the fusion of 1894, however, a Populist U.S. Senator was elected, and "the Populists of North Carolina have now an honest election law." With such examples of victory over Democratic "bulldozers" before them, Manning could not understand why men like Johnson were endangering their best chance for ultimate success:

There are some who would rather go to hell on the whole of the Omaha platform than accomplish anything on the half of it. It is as foolish for an Alabama Populist to ignore the fact that we have not a fair vote and an honest count, . . . as it would be for the subjects of the Czar of Russia to make a campaign for 'the Omaha Platform or nothing.' Neither have [sic] any voice in their government. It would be best for the subjects of the Czar to first start a revolution and establish a republic—and would it not be best for the Alabama disfranchised citizen to first want a republican form of government in Alabama?48
Populists, said Manning, had no right to demand that the Alabama GOP abandon the political field entirely to the People's Party in 1896; such a view was "selfish and damnable." Republican votes were crucial in both the Hill Country and the Black Belt, and just as important, the national Republican Party would control the Fifty-fourth Congress, which Populists were asking to take the "extraordinary step" of investigating state politics. What would happen, asked Joseph, when Republican leaders learned "that the Populists in Alabama who want committees sent to the state, and who have [congressional] contests, and who hold office through Republican votes, are abusing them, and swearing that they would not cooperate with a Republican even to down a Bourbon and get the right to vote?" Leaving this ominous and prophetic question hanging, Manning delivered an emphatic conclusion: "I believe in taking advantage of every inch of ground that can be gained from the aid and cooperation of Republicans or anyone else. There is no reason for Alabama Populists to fight Alabama Republicans. Politics is politics."^49

Seemingly, Manning had had his say; upon completion of his Banner-Advertiser blast he left on another trip to New York City. Just one month later, though, fearful that he might have been misunderstood by E.M. Johnson and other real Midlanders in Alabama, Manning restated his position in a second article. There is little doubt that he was devoted to the preservation and spread of People's Party doctrine, but by the autumn of 1895 he seems almost to be persuading himself as he insists:
I stand today, politically, where I have always stood; I believe politically what I have always believed. . . . I love the principles of the party to which I belong, but I love Americanism and the republican form of government also. . . . On this plain [sic] I am willing to meet all patriotic citizens, not because I am willing to desert my political principles, but because I want to see the time come that when the party to which I belong receives a majority of votes cast, it may have the victory.50

Meanwhile Reuben Kolb, J.W. DuBose, Philander Morgan, and other Antifusionists had interested themselves in an ambitious scheme advanced by Daniel S. Troy of Montgomery, a distinguished ex-Democrat currently in political limbo. Troy, the well-known author of Alabama's Railroad Commission Law of 1881, had come out of semi-retirement in August of 1894 to declare, emotionally, that only a revolution could save Alabama from the rule of Bourbon corruptionists.51 A year later, with the help of DuBose, Troy was circulating a call for a great non-partisan silver and ballot reform convention to be held in Birmingham. Such a meeting, the Montgomerian trusted, would be a perfect vehicle for launching a new nominally Populist reform coalition. He hoped, in addition, that the conference would endorse the gubernatorial candidacy of his friend Robert A. McCullar of Limestone County, a Democratic silverite. The Kolbites fell in with the plan because it seemed to open up a possibility for the Populist-Democratic union they had originally desired. But it chanced that McCullar, though disgusted with the Democracy, was extremely reluctant to declare himself a Populist. Nor was Troy able to secure the cooperation of his old Democratic ally S.W. John in planning a new departure. John and J.F. Johnston were busy
planning their own silver meeting, which they had set for September 10. \textsuperscript{52}

Despite these obstacles, the determined Troy was able to secure the signatures of over two hundred reformers, and by early September he had decided to hold his convention on November 13. \textsuperscript{53} The elder statesman's prestige insured that the state and regional press would take his announcement seriously. Still, there were powerful reasons why the best hopes of the Antifusionist chieftans might not come to fruition.

In giving his opinion of Troy's proposal, A.P. Longshore of the Anniston Alabama Leader warned that Democrats would not attend a genuinely nonpartisan convention, since "most of them are as afraid of the party lash as the devil is of holy water." \textsuperscript{54} Longshore failed to mention another reason why Democrats would be likely to shun and Cooperationists likely to oppose the new movement—namely, the revolutionary language frequently employed by its sponsors. Troy and Kolb were both angry men; neither, since the 1894 elections, had abandoned the conviction that violence might someday be necessary if republican government were to be restored in Alabama. For more than half a year, Kolb had refrained from making threats against the security of the Oates regime. But Troy made it clear that the party he hoped to found would be an aggressive, fighting organization. In August he told a reporter for J.F. Johnston's Birmingham State that it was "probable" that the November convention would "advise the use of such physical force as may be necessary to secure, at last, the form of an honest election." \textsuperscript{55}

In mid-September Troy elaborated upon this position in a dignified, chilling letter to the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune. Reformers, he said, should be prepared to use
whatever force is necessary to stop [an] election and prevent its being held until an intelligent representative is placed on the board of inspectors, . . . even though it cost the life of one or all of the [Democratic] inspectors, and of the Sheriff or his deputy. If blood is shed it will be on the hands of those who are banded together to violate the law, and not on those [sic] who are seeking to prevent its violation . . . The people have not been advised as to what are their rights and duties in this matter.56

Troy's words caused a profound excitement among Alabama Populists. Some undoubtedly agreed with Antifusionists H.P. Burruss of Birmingham and H.N. Vest of Morgan County, who published letters in the Ozark Banner-Advertiser praising the concept of "lawful force." Other Populists, though, were disturbed at the sudden resurrection of a divisive issue. A.K. Shepard of Birmingham subsequently wrote to J.W. DuBose: "For one, I can take no part in wrongdoing nor in a resort to violence to prevent the wrong-doing." He added that "the People's Party . . . would have succeeded long ago, but for the violent speeches of some of its over-zealous adherents."57 Without question these same considerations helped induce Frank Baltzell, Joseph Manning, A.T. Goodwyn, and P.G. Bowman, none of whose names had appeared on the call for the conference, to begin working for the selection of Cooperationist delegates. In Kolb's current home county of Jefferson, for example, Bowman and his supporters made a strong showing at a delegate-choosing caucus held on November 9. While a committee composed of two Cooperationists and two Antifusionists nominated the county's thirty representatives, Kolb tried four separate times to defend himself against charges that he was receiving Democratic money in return for opposing the
cooperation of Populists and Republicans. Finally the adroit old pragmatist made a powerful speech calling for unity within the party, and swore that he would back the next reformist gubernatorial nominee. On this night of forced conciliation, Kolb may have had a presentment that it was too late to remake the agrarian movement in Alabama. In October D.S. Troy had died unexpectedly at age 63, and with him died much of the hope that large numbers of Silver Democrats could be tempted to leave the "party of the fathers." By November 13 it was plain that, while events in Jefferson County had not necessarily been duplicated statewide, a sizeable number of the more than 800 reformers assembled in Birmingham were unsympathetic to the original purpose of the convention.

The featured speaker of the day was Joseph Sibley of Pennsylvania, who exhorted his audience to participate in a great silver crusade against the "money power" and its representatives in the old parties. The delegates listened politely to Sibley and then, abandoning all pretense of forming a new organization, squabbled bitterly over the question of who should be permanent chairman of the meeting. After a compromise candidate was chosen, a committee made up of leading Anti-fusionists and Cooperationists draw up a set of resolutions indicative of the degree to which the Kolbite forces were by this time willing to compromise. In a carefully worded statement, the delegates promised to work for the "cooperation of all men who favor honest elections and full monetary reform, regardless of past or present party affiliations, upon terms of fairness and justice to all." In addition, the convention petitioned the Fifty-fourth Congress not to recognize Senator John T.
Morgan, but "to send an investigating committee to Alabama . . . to take such action as the Constitution and the laws exact and demand."  

The November conference had the effect of quieting the debate between Antifusionists and Cooperationists, but it could not heal the personal enmities which had been growing for more than a year. When A.T. Goodwyn incautiously referred to the Birmingham meeting as a triumph for "fusion," Philander Morgan replied in print that "fusion is simply impossible in light of the resolutions [adopted]," and Antifusionist Gus Hobson of the Tuscaloosa Journal characterized Goodwyn's remarks as "a black, dastardly and hellish lie." Privately, Morgan wrote to J.W. DuBose: "I expected nothing better of those engaged in trying to 'drive or drag us on to die' . . . The sooner we can get rid of these schemers, the better it will be for those who are left."  

Whatever Reuben Kolb felt, though, he kept concealed. Indeed, he had begun to work with evident sincerity to patch up the party he had helped to tear asunder. After a Populist executive committee meeting of January 23, 1896, during which Kolb, Baltzell, Manning, Whitehead, and others conferred with a now-agreeable R.A. Moseley and the Republican committee, the ex-Jeffersonian leader conceded that "the Republican Party of this state has in its ranks many good and able men, . . . [who have] stood by us in the past two campaigns without ever asking or expecting a division of offices." To the surprise of many, Kolb completed his volte face by suggesting that the Republicans be given three of the seven state nominations in 1896.  

On January 23 and at subsequent meetings, Populists and Republicans planned to hold simultaneous state conventions on April 28, and agreed that each party should "emunciate [its] princi-
plea" while working together to nominate a common ticket. To such die-hard Antifusionists as Gus Hobson or J.M. Young of the Butler Choctaw Alliance, these arrangements made a mockery of agrarian principles, but most anti-Republican Populists, including J.M. Whitehead, came reluctantly to the conclusion that associating with Cooperationists and Moseley Republicans was better than joining the Silver Democracy outright. The Cooperationists were relieved, but Joseph Manning probably spoke only for himself when he announced that he would not care if a Republican headed the next reformist slate. At any rate, and with many a creak and groan, the People's Party was reunited.

Manning and his friends had reason for guarded optimism, but their greatest challenges lay ahead. During the next seven months they must strive to maintain party unity while lobbying for a Senatorial investigation of Alabama politics. In addition, they would attempt to nominate state candidates satisfactory to Cooperationists, unreconstructed Antifusionists, and Republicans; and finally, they must participate in a national People's Party convention which promised to be setting for a showdown between silverite fusionists and national Midroaders. Another perplexing problem concerned the future of the Alabama GOP. William Vaughn had by 1896 formed a separate goldbug wing, through which he was assiduously promoting the presidential candidacy of William McKinley. If he could persuade a majority of the twenty-two-member Republican executive committee to accept the direction of Mark Hanna, Vaughn could depose Moseley and take over the Republican
machinery and treasury. Moseley, Lewis Parsons, T.H. Aldrich, and W.H. Aldrich were associated with the presidential "boom" than being drummed up by anti-McKinley men for Speaker Thomas B. Reed, and Manning for one was convinced that "Czar Reed's" nomination would be beneficial to the reform movement in Alabama. It was widely known, Manning realized, that Reed favored the Alabama congressional contests. Moreover, the Speaker had declared that, unlike McKinley, he would go "into the Presidency . . . unpledged to any man for anything." Thus the chances for a successful Populist-Republican coalition depended, to some extent, on the outcome of "the scramble for delegates to the National Republican Convention," as Manning referred to the Vaughn-Moseley fight. More important, nothing less than the continued existence of the Alabama People's Party depended upon the outcome of the contest being waged before the U.S. Senate by Warren S. Reece. Manning was aware of all the variables which could affect developments in the coming year; but, like many Populists, he was too busy to dwell upon the extent of his helplessness. "What we want is to win," he said. "We want a crowd big enough to make a noise." For all his campaigner's facade, however, there were times when he wondered if anyone was listening in Washington, D.C. There, he knew, the fate of the Cooperation movement would be decided.
Footnotes to Chapter VII

1. Ashland People's Party Advocate, April 12, 1895, and J.C. Manning to H.D. Lloyd, March 5, 23, 1895, in the Lloyd Papers. For information concerning Howard's years as a lecturer, see Harris, "The Political Career of M.W. Howard," 23-24, 61-64. The quoted passage is taken from M.W. Howard, If Christ Came to Congress (Washington, D.C.: By the Author, 1895), 17.

2. W.C. Oates to T.F. Turner, March 23, 1895, in Letterbook 70, Official Governors' Papers. See also a printed broadside, "Open Letter by the Governor," 1895, in the William Calvin Oates Papers, ADAH.

3. T.G. Jones to F.C. Randolph, November 12, 1894, T.G. Jones to J. Purifoy, November 30, 1894, and W.C. Oates to J.A. Reeves, February 21, 1895, in Letterbook 70, Official Governors' Papers. Jones told Purifoy that Randolph had "verbally" explained "that the default was caused by reporting as paid, sums that indulged taxpayers." See also the New York Times, March 19, 1895, the Montgomery Advertiser, March 31, 1895, and the Sheffield Reaper, quoted in the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, April 11, 1895.


5. New York Times, March 19, 1895. Some of the statements in Manning and Howard's first and second interviews were intended to refute several optimistic press releases which Oates had circulated in an attempt to attract Northern capital to Alabama. See the Mansfield Ohio, Daily Shield, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, March 14, 1895, and the New York Times, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, March 20, 1895.


7. New York Times, March 19, 1895. The Times carried Manning and Howard's first and second interviews on the same days. Manning never directly records his reactions to the financial world of New York City, but the following passage in Five To Twenty-Five, 30, gives an indication of the conflicting feelings he must have felt as he moved among well-to-do reformers on his first trip to the metropolis. "I have, in the years ago, walked through Central Park in New York and watched the vain rich riding along with a gold-braided driver and a braid-ornamented flunky, seated up high front, and
I have felt like I would like to chuck rocks at these poor fools as I did at lizards [sic] when I was a boy." For further unfavorable impressions of the urban squalor in New York City, see Manning's newspaper, the Alexander City Southern American, March 24, 1909. For information on M.W. Howard's socioeconomic views, see Goodwyn, Democratic Promise, 383, 407, 487, 672 n. 22.


10. Ashland People's Party Advocate, May 24, 1895. Howard stayed in New York, but his name is not mentioned in connection with Manning after March 20. For information on Howard's book The American Plutocracy (1895), see Harris, "The Political Career of M.W. Howard," 64-70.

11. Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 69.


13. Evergreen Conecuh Record, March 28, 1895; the other Democratic newspapers cited are quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, March 24, 26, 27, 1895, together with similar condemnations taken from the Eclectic Whig and Observer, the Selma Times, the Eufaula Times and News, and the Pensacola, Florida, News. For the balanced view that exposures were bound to follow in the wake of widespread fraud, see the Montgomery Journal, quoted in the Union Springs Herald, April 3, 1895.
14. Manning's letter, dated April 4, appeared in the Ashland People's Party Advocate, April 13, 1895. Apparently, most Alabama Populists heartily concurred in the sentiments Manning expressed. One reformist editor noted: "The organized press appears to think that the Organized Democracy can commit all the fraudulent practices it has a mind to . . . so long as . . . the rest of the world cannot see there is any fraud . . . But even Organized Democrats don't care [for] their fraudulent practices being the talk of the whole world." See the Clanton Banner, quoted in the Centre Cherokee Sentinel, March 20, 1895.

15. The Atlanta Constitution and the Birmingham Times are quoted in the New York Times, March 20, 1895. For information on the attitude of Louisiana ballot reformers, some of whom believed that Manning had shown "the cloven hoof," see the New Orleans States, quoted in the New York Times, March 21, 1895, and the New York Times, March 23, 1895. For a number of stinging comments on the vacillating course of Clark Howell, see the Montgomery Advertiser, March 20, 21, 23, 1895. Evidently Howell was afraid of being branded a "bond repudiator."

16. New York Tribune, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, March 23, 1895. Reid, who described himself as a long-time friend and sponsor of ballot reform movements in the South, was basing his judgment upon the violent criticisms of Manning and Howard in the Southern Democratic press.

17. For the story of Randolph's flight, and for Jones' and Oates' explanations, see the Montgomery Advertiser, March 31, April 16, 24, 1895, and the Sheffield Reaper, quoted in the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, April 11, 1895. Randolph fled via Texas with plenty of hard cash. Manning later speculated that he took as much as $75,000 with him, a charge that was angrily denied by W.J. Vaiden, Oates' private secretary. In any event, Oates waited until mid-April before declaring Randolph an outlaw. Ultimately, Randolph murdered a man in Brazil and was jailed there. See W.J. Vaiden to the Montgomery Advertiser, dated December 12 and published December 18, 1895.

18. J.C. Manning to H.D. Lloyd, April 8, 1895, in the Lloyd Papers.

19. Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 71, and the New York Times, March 14, 15, 16, 23, 24, 26, 1895. The Parkhurst group planned a rally at Cooper Union on March 27, which probably explains why they failed to organize a rally for Manning, and may also explain a five or six-day hiatus in Manning's activities in late March. For a dramatic, high-moralistic account of the battle for an honest municipal police force, see Theodore Roosevelt, New York, in Theodore Roosevelt (ten vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), X, 533-534, 538-539, 540-547.
20. J.C. Manning to H.D. Lloyd, March 23, April 8, 1895, in the Lloyd Papers. For an indication of Manning's fund-raising hopes, see the Atlanta Constitution, quoted in the New York Times, March 20, 1895. A long letter published by Manning in the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, September 26, 1895, shows that Manning spent some of his time in New York watching the urban reform leagues in action.


22. Montgomery Journal, quoted in the Union Springs Herald, April 3, 1895. Manning's frustration with the non-use of Southern resources is similar to that expressed by critics of Bourbon economics, the "New South advocates." See Gaston, The New South Creed, 70, for Henry Grady's celebrated "Coffin story," an ironical tale of a Southerner being buried, clothes, coffin, coffin nails and tombstone, with materials alien to his abundant native soil. Manning, of course, was pre-eminently a social and economic democrat rather than a "booster" per se.


25. J.C. Manning to H.D. Lloyd, March 23, 31, April 8, 1895, in the Lloyd Papers. For a report that Manning had "envious [sic] business as well as political connections" in New York City, see the Montgomery Journal, quoted in the Ashland People's Party Advocate, December 13, 1895. On the other hand, Joseph continued to scramble for funds; see J.C. Manning to W.E. Chandler, April 6, 1896, in the Chandler Papers.


28. Greenville Living Truth, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, December 28, 1895. Like Whitehead, a number of Democratic editors
thought that Manning had let fame go to his head. The Ashland Clay County Advance, January 7, 1896, claimed: "Manning now wears a stovepipe hat and patent-leather shoes."

29. Montgomery Advertiser, April 10, 1895, and the Cleveland, Ohio, World, quoted in the Ashland People's Party Advocate, June 14, 1895. See also Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 71. At Cleveland, Manning alluded to the benefits to be derived from allowing black voters to "divide," or vote according to their individual interests and consciences. If black voters could vote as they pleased, he believed, North Alabama yeomen would get out of the habit of viewing lower class blacks as a weapon in the hands of the planter class. Thus, Manning hoped to "solve the race question" in politics, and lay the foundation for an enduring alliance among black and white farmers.

30. Ashland Clay County Advance, December 6, 13, 1895, and the Opelika Industrial News, January 2, February 13, 1896. Manning secured his invitation to speak before the Union League at a time when he was making quite a number of mysterious flying journeys to Northern cities. Editor Horace Hood described one such trip: "Without any announcement, Mr. Manning took a north bound train... and was next heard of at Cleveland, Ohio... While in Cleveland Mr. Manning lectured, [but] further than that, nothing was heard of what this distinguished anti-Democrat did in that city." Manning also made short stops in New York and Philadelphia. See the Montgomery Journal, quoted in the Ashland People's Party Advocate, December 13, 1895. See also the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, September 28, 1895, and what may be a Manning Interview in the Washington Post, quoted in the Raleigh Caucasian, September 12, 1895. At some point in 1895, Manning met Ohio Governor William McKinley. See J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 17, 1928, in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Papers (hereinafter cited as NAACP Papers), LC, for a discussion of Manning's relationship with McKinley and with Philadelphiaan Charles Emory Smith.

31. Ashland People's Party Advocate, January 17, 1896, probably quoting the Philadelphia Press. During the course of his speech, Manning mingled class-oriented and patriotic arguments in an emotional manner: "The appeal for education that comes from the innocent faces of the Alabama mountaineers' children as they caress a mother's careworn face," he said, "is coming to carry more force of persuasion with our voters than the bluster of Bourbons in their feigned warnings of 'Negro domination'... Public schools and Americanism, and ballot-box stuffing and Bourbonism cannot long prevail at the same place at the same time."

32. Opelika Industrial News, June 13, July 4, 25, 1896, and Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 200, 287, 289. Apparently, Manning's motives for moving to Opelika were obscure and mysterious even at that time. Populist editors and politicians across Alabama
were ignorant of his change of residence for months, so it is likely that he was acting on his own initiative. In any event, the Mannings' house (next to the Opelika Methodist Church) served Joseph chiefly as a way station between trips to Birmingham, Montgomery, and the North, while Zoe undoubtedly spent much of her pregnancy with relatives in Tallapoosa County. If the turmoil of travel and factional warfare had allowed him more time, Manning might well have worked to build up agrarian solidarity and support for the "Congressional Strategy" among the common folk of Lee, Russell, Chambers, Barbour, and other counties of east Alabama—counties in which blacks were typically a slight majority of the population. Thus, circumstances thwarted what might have been a bold move to broaden and strengthen the base of the People's Party. By the summer of 1896, when Manning tested the political water by running for the legislature from Lee County, Populism was already doomed, and he suffered an ignominious defeat. For more information see below, Chapter VIII.

33. Montgomery Advertiser, October 22, 1895, quoting the Eufaula Times and News.

34. For information on the Democratic silver movement in Alabama, see the New York Times, March 19, 1895, the Montgomery Advertiser, April 7, 25, 1895, the Union Springs Herald, June 12, 1895, and the Raleigh Caucasian, July 11, August 29, 1895. See also the Memorial Record, II, 284-287, Hackney, Populism to Progressivism, 52-58, 73-74, 212, and Karl Louis Rodabaugh, "Fusion, Confusion, Defeat and Disfranchisement: The 'Fadeout of Populism' in Alabama," Alabama Historical Quarterly, XXXIV (Summer, 1972), 131-143.

35. For information on Kolb's free silver activities, see the New York Times, March 29, 1895, the Montgomery Advertiser, April 4, 1895, and the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, April 25, 1895. By the summer of 1895, newspaper stories charged Kolb with accepting money from the American Bimetallic League for the support of the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune. Later, other reports would claim that Kolb had sold large blocks of stock in the Tribune company to Silver Democrats. There is probably no way to verify or disprove these stories, but it should be remembered that Kolb, like most Alabama Populists, was engaged in a continuous and perfectly legitimate search for funds. See the Birmingham Age-Herald, quoted in the Opelika Industrial News, August 8, 1895.

36. Prattville Progress, March 29, 1895, quoting the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune and the Birmingham Times; see also the Montgomery Advertiser, February 13, March 24, May 3, 1895, the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, March 7, 1895, and the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, July 5, 1895. In March, Hanna entertained Vaughn and another Alabama Republican, William Youngblood, in Thomasville, Georgia. See Rogers, One-

37. Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune, quoted in the Opelika Industrial News, June 27, 1895. A large sampling of the replies to the circular are printed in the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, June 20, 1895. A typical response was that of A.C. Townshend, Populist leader of the second congressional district: "I am opposed to fusing with any party. But . . . I am in favor of fighting it out on a straight line under one banner of 'Mutual Rights,' which implies a free ballot and a fair count." Even J.M. Whitehead, who considered himself a Midlander par excellence, answered: "I do not go to the extent of saying that I will be opposed to fusion in any event, regardless of what may happen, but simply that it is premature now, even to consider it." Whitehead, however, tended to side with Kolb in future factional disputes, partly, one is forced to believe, because he was personally estranged from Manning and Goodwyn.

38. Ozark Banner-Advertiser, June 20, 1895. Adams wrote: "I do not favor . . . fusion with the Republican or Democratic parties. But I do favor cooperation at the ballot box with all qualified American citizens, Republicans, Democrats, Jews or Gentiles, if it can be done without sacrifice of principles and in the interest of a majority of our people." Adams wanted to impose strict conditions on the Republican Party prior to any Populist-Republican alliances, but he was willing to praise the conduct of Republicans in the last two elections, which many Kolblites were unwilling to do. See the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, Jr., supplement to the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, September 5, 1895. Manning, in addition to explaining the difference between fusion and cooperation, lampooned the prospect of Populist-Democratic fusion by describing a grotesque, imaginary scene, in which a notorious "fraudocrat" and a famous victim joined forces: "There are some in Alabama who believe that . . . a fusion of the Free Silver Democrats and the Populists may be made on the money question . . . In the case of such a fusion, the free silver champion of Dallas County, Hon. Frank Pettus, and the Hon. Hauben Kolb . . . would present a study to the people of Alabama . . . on the same free silver ticket." See the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, June 23, 1895.

39. For the previous anti-Republican statements of Whitehead, Morgan, and other Populists, see above, Chapter IV. For the quoted passage, see A.A. Willoughby to the Ashland Clay County Advance, published June 19, 1896.
40. Montgomery Advertiser, July 20, 25, 27, 1895, the Anniston
Alabama Leader, July 25, 1895, the Centre Cherokee Sentinel,
August 1, 1895, and the Ashland People's Party Advocate, August 2,
1895.

41. Eufaula Times and News, July 25, 1895. In an interview with the
Birmingham Age-Herald, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, July
27, 1895, Manning revealed that Kolb had in fact been unable to
control a majority of the executive committee. On October 6,
1895, the Advertiser reprinted an editorial exchange between the
Wetumpka Reform Advocate and the Birmingham People's Weekly
Tribune. The former, edited by A.T. Goodwyn's son Tyler
Goodwyn, gave credence to the charge that Kolb's actions were
the result of Democratic investments in the Tribune; DuBose's
rebuttal accuses the younger Goodwyn of being a fusionist and a
liar, and describes the Reform Advocate as "a very industrious
reptile."

42. For a sampling of Antifusionist and Cooperationist opinion, see
the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune, quoted in the Montgomery
Advertiser, July 5, 1895, the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, July 11, 18,
September 5, October 17, 31, December 5, 1895, January 23, 30, 1896,
the Ashland People's Party Advocate, July 26, August 2, November 1,
1895, and the Butler Choctaw Alliance, March 17, 1896. With one
exception, no writer on either side injected the "race question"
into the "fusion" controversy. The exception was J.M. Whitehead,
who warned that the Democrats would, in 1896, make much of the fact
"that the Republican Party is overwhelmingly a negro party"—an
accurate prediction. Whitehead's letter is printed in the Ozark
Banner-Advertiser, October 17, 1895.

43. S.M. Adams to the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, in the Ozark Banner
Advertiser, Jr., September 3, 1895, and J.M. Whitehead to the
Banner-Advertiser, in the October 17, 1895, issue. Antifusionists
and Cooperationists, with a few exceptions, intended to accomplish
the same things; nearly all Populists wanted to secure the aid of
Republican voters in overthrowing the Democrats in 1896. The two
sides discussed their intentions, however, from entirely opposing
viewpoints. The Antifusionists, for reasons of factional,
ideological, and no doubt psychological preference, were arguing
against something—"fusion"—which no Alabama Populist would willingly
support in 1895. The Cooperationists shunned the word "fusion,"
and refused to concede that they had shed any of their Populist
principles. Instead they claimed that they were merely putting first
things first. Shelby County Populist J.W. Pitts summarized this
argument: "Let us get the ballot box stuffers out . . . and then
we can settle the question of finance and tariff." See J.W. Pitts
to the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, June 8, 1895, in the July 11, 1895,
issue.

45. M.W. Howard was a Midroader by any definition. Aloof from the complications of Alabama reform politics, he remained a staunch defender of Omaha principles. For long quotations from Howard's *The American Plutocracy*, see the Raleigh Caucasian, November 28, 1895. It may be significant that several of the Antifusionists who so loudly proclaimed themselves to be Midroaders, notably Philander Morgan and Henry Page Burruss, supported the Democratic candidate for governor in 1896. See Philander Morgan to J.W. DuBose, July 7, 1896, in the DuBose Papers.

46. Ozark Banner-Advertiser, September 26, 1895. Some of the newspapers which were generally Antifusionist or anti-Republican were the Butler Choctaw Alliance, edited by Joseph M. Young, the Tuscaloosa Journal, edited by Gus Hobson, and the Centre Cherokee Sentinel, edited by I.F. Brock. The Ashland People's Party Advocate, edited first by C.F. Dodson and then by J.W. Whately, and the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, edited by J.P. Oliver, Sr., were neutral journals.

47. Ozark Banner-Advertiser, September 19, 26, 1895. Manning and Johnson both published their most effective statements in the September 26 issue. The two men had been in contact since June at least, since Manning published a copy of his "definition" of Cooperation in the June 27 issue of the Banner-Advertiser. In Johnson's comments concerning Manning, there seem to be references to correspondence which never saw the light of day in print; Manning's September 26 essay likewise seems to be answering a dogmatic stand on Omaha principles which Johnson had not made, publicly, until the September 26 issue. For all practical purposes, then, the September 26 articles represent the height of a drawn-out private controversy.


49. Ozark Banner-Advertiser, September 26, 1895.

50. Ozark Banner-Advertiser, October 31, 1895, and the Ashland People's Party Advocate, November 1, 1895. There is considerable evidence that Manning's articles helped swing the balance of undecided reformers over to Cooperation. Articles and letters in support of his position began to appear more frequently in the columns of the Banner-Advertiser. One letter, Purry Floyd to the Banner-Advertiser, published January 23, 1896, compared the Cooperation of Populists and Republicans with that of the American Revolutionaries and their French allies. Floyd quoted Thomas Jefferson: "All differences of
opinion are not differences of principle," and concluded with a paraphrase of the Sage of Monticello: "We are all republicans today that [sic] believe in a republican form of government." Perhaps the best indication that Manning's words represented the feelings of a majority of Alabama Populists, however, is a conciliatory editorial published by E.M. Johnson on October 17, before Manning's second statement. Johnson said: "If a republican form of government is secured in the state of Alabama, . . . then it will be time enough for the Republican Party to enter its claims [i.e., its own program], which it will undoubtedly do. But at this juncture all official party aspiration should be overshadowed by a patriotic effort on the part of every liberty loving person . . . What matters it about party names, anyway? Here in Dale [County] we have old Republican patriots, who are affiliating with us in this grand fight for reform, . . . and to say that the People's Party will forget these men would be an absurdity."


53. Raleigh Caucasian, August 6, 1895, and September 19, 1895, quoting the Atlanta Constitution. See also the Anniston Alabama Leader, August 15, 1895.

54. Anniston Alabama Leader, September 5, 1895.

55. Ibid., August 15, 1895, quoting the Birmingham State. It is difficult to say whether Kolb advocated the use of force from March to November, 1895, because so few copies of the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune exist. However, by the spring of 1895 both G.B. Crowe and former pacifist J.M. Whitehead were urging their friends to organize on a military basis. See G.B. Crowe to G.D. Street, April 6, 1895, in the Street Papers, and the Greenville Living Truth, quoted in the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, May 23, 1895.

56. Troy's letter is reprinted, together with some dispatches from the Atlanta Constitution concerning the impending "revolution," in the Raleigh Caucasian, September 19, 1895.
57. H.P. Burress to the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, October 3, 1895, H.N. Vest to the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, October 31, 1895, and A.K. Shepard to J.W. DuBose, December 10, 1895, in the DuBose Papers. Shepard expressed a general grassroots feeling of disgust with factional ambitions when he confessed: "Many of the truest and most influential members of the party have expressed to me their distrust of the old leaders of the party, and their absolute unwillingness to take part in personal contests." See also the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, January 23, 1896.

58. Jasper Eagle, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, October 6, 1895, the Montgomery Advertiser, November 11, 1895, the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, November 21, 1895, and the Eufaula Times and News, November 29, 1895.

59. Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, October 31, 1895, and the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, November 21, 1895.

60. Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, November 21, 1895, and the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, November 21, 1895. A.P. Longshore and Frank Baltzell were the rival candidates for Permanent Chairman.

61. Montgomery Advertiser, November 14, 1895, the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, November 21, 1895, the Opelika Industrial News, November 21, 1895, the Eufaula Times and News, November 21, 27, 1895, and the Ashland People's Party Advocate, December 6, 1895. The resolutions committee members were P.G. Bowman, S.M. Adams, J.M. Whitehead, A.T. Goodwyn, Frank Baltzell, R.F. Kolb, and A.P. Longshore. Most newspaper accounts attributed the authorship of the resolutions, astonishingly enough, to Philander Morgan. Manning was traveling in the Northeast when Troy's convention took place.


63. R.F. Kolb to the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune, quoted in the Eufaula Times and News, January 30, 1896. Kolb's letter was a warm and dignified admission that he was prepared to work with the majority of his party. This was especially the case, he said, since "it seems the press and leaders of the 'Organized Democracy' desire no cooperation or affiliation with the Populists of Alabama."

64. Birmingham Age-Herald, quoted in the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, January, 31, 1896, the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, March 5, 1896, the Butler Choctaw Alliance, March 17, 1896, and the Greenville Living Truth, quoted in the Centre Cherokee Sentinel, March 26, 1896. For a perceptive Democratic interpretation of Cooperation as a reformist necessity, see the Covington Times, March 6, 1896.
Ever since the Federal elections of 1894, Populist National Chairman H.E. Taubeneck had been engaged in a campaign intended to replace the Omaha Platform with a free silver platform in 1896. In January, 1896, Taubeneck and his national committee voted to hold the Populist national convention in July, after the Republican and Democratic conventions. Taubeneck and his friends in the bimetallic lobby believed that the old parties would nominate gold standard candidates, leaving the People's Party free to gather in the discontented Republican and Democratic silverites. To Midroaders, and to Populists who were committed to the existence of the People's Party as an independent entity, it seemed that Taubeneck was setting the stage for a sell-out. See Goodwyn, Democratic Promise, 459-463. For the Midroader reaction of an Alabama Populist, see T.B. Bickley to Marion Butler, August 7, 1896, in the Marion Butler Papers, Southern Historical Collection.

For examples of the techniques used by Hanna's men to influence state committeemen in the South, see Sherman, The Republican Party and Black America, 4-5; also see Rogers, One-Gallon Rebellen, 308-309.

Manning, Fadeout, 42-44, 98. For more information on the factional divisions of the Alabama GOP in 1896, see below, Chapter VIII.

Butler Choctaw Herald, March 4, 1896.
CHAPTER VIII

1896: THE DEFEAT OF COOPERATION

By December 1895, even as rival Populist newspapers in Alabama thundered challenges over the wisdom of "Cooperation" with Republicans, the leaders of all reformist factions were preparing to support Warren S. Reese in his senatorial contest case. Ultimately, lobbying duties would be shared by a number of Populists and Republicans, including Joseph Manning, Reuben Kolb, R.A. Moseley, Frank Baltzell, A.T. Goodwyn, W.H. Skaggs, W.F. Aldrich, and P.G. Bowman. But none of these men put more emotion, work, and money into the fight than Reese himself. Indeed, as the Fifty-fourth Congress convened, Reese was preparing to spend his second straight winter in Washington, D.C. He had "worried along" through the second session of the Fifty-third Congress, seeking the advice of Republican and Populist Senators and familiarizing himself with the nature of the task before him. John Tyler Morgan, he found, was a man of entrenched position, great political intelligence, and many friends. Nonetheless Reese had worked persistently and patiently. Now, he hoped that his days of futility and waiting were nearing an end.

From the start, wrote Joseph Manning, three Senators "who recognized the meritorious nature of the contest . . . were Chandler of New Hampshire, Hoar of Massachusetts, and Allen of Nebraska."
The figure of W.E. Chandler seemed especially impressive to Alabama
Populists. As a holdover from the days of Radical Reconstruction, the
old New Englander was part of a Republican tradition of involvement in
Southern affairs which went back to the "towering figure" of Abraham
Lincoln. In addition, as Manning knew, Chandler was a staunch party
man and a politician whose skills "were not of the mediocre type."
But for all his ability and experience, Chandler could not work
effectively with William V. Allen, Reese's chief Populist sponsor.
Northern Republicans and Southern Populists alike knew little of Allen,
except that he was a political novice and a single-minded advocate of
free silver. It soon developed, however that the Nebraskan possessed
a knack for initiating legislative action at the wrong time and a
positive talent for ignoring advice given him by Chandler. Chandler,
for his part, was tolerant neither of Allen's parliamentary naiveté nor
of his association with Democratic silverites. Such were the "leaders"
with whom the Alabama Populists rather optimistically prepared to put
their claims to the test. In reality Chandler and his colleague, the
veteran George F. Hoar, led only a corporal's guard of old-line civil
libertarians, and Allen was one of a handful of Populists and pseudo-
Populists who occupied seats in the upper chamber.

On December 4, 1895, Chandler reviewed the charges against the
Alabama Democracy, and together with Allen submitted over one hundred
petitions protesting the election frauds of 1894. Reese, Manning, Skaggs,
Goodwyn, and other investigators had not been idle; approximately 30,000
Alabamians had testified to a variety of fraudulent or illegal Demo-
ocratic practices. Next, on January 7, 1896, Allen formally proposed the creation of a special committee to determine whether official misconduct in Alabama "may have affected the election of a U.S. Senator" or destroyed the "political autonomy" of the state. The Allen Resolution as it was called, was a dual threat to Bourbon rule, for it undertook not only to challenge the right of one Senator to his place, but also to open up the possibility of massive Federal intervention in the affairs of a functioning state government. It was a startling proposition and for that reason vulnerable to the procedural delays available to the opponents of bills brought before the U.S. Senate. A number of cautious Democrats and Republicans were anxious to know what such an investigation would cost; so the Allen Resolution was assigned, over the protests of its sponsors, to the "Committee to Audit and Control the Contingent Expenses of the Senate." This time, though, the obstructionists were disappointed, for Chairman J.P. Jones of the Contingent Expenses Committee kept the measure only three weeks before releasing it with a low estimate of $20,000. Best of all from the standpoint of the embattled Populists of Alabama, Jones suggested that the whole matter be referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections, chaired by William E. Chandler. This was done, and Reese's struggle entered into its happiest phase.

With the Allen Resolution safely in hand, Chandler began the task of writing a definitive report. Though impatient Alabamians wrote letters and passed resolutions urging him to hurry, the old Republican
labored for a month, determined to present the evidence of fraud in such a way as to discredit Alabama's Democratic regime once and for all. Finally, on March 3 the majority report of the Privileges and Elections Committee was published, complete with an elaborate statistical analysis of the 1894 state election returns and an excellent discussion of the techniques of ballot box stuffing, bribery, and intimidation. It was apparent to Chandler, G.F. Hoar, and the other Republican members of the committee that Kolb would have defeated Dates by at least 7,000 votes had it not been for the "wholesale falsification of returns [by] dishonest election officials." The committee estimated that as many as 35,000 fraudulent ballots were cast in fifteen Black Belt counties, and concluded that both Kolb and a potential "Kolb legislature" were "counted out the same way." Most damning of all were the generalizations which Chandler—with the help of his Alabama contacts—had drawn from the masses of information. Referring to Democratic methods as the manifestation of a "great conspiracy," the Senator from New Hampshire noted that "the problem is not one merely of local fraud . . . [Rather], the case made is that of carefully planned and deliberately manufactured . . . returns made . . . to give apparent title to a state government." If such were indeed the case, he continued, then "it may be the duty of the Senate to oust Mr. Morgan from his seat." In the meantime, Chandler recommended the speedy appointment of a five-man special committee empowered to travel, take testimony, and make use of U.S. Marshals. In accordance with his wishes, the Allen Resolution as reported was placed upon the
the Senate calendar. For agrarians and Republicans in Alabama and the South it was a satisfying moment. But Reese and his colleagues well knew that the real test was yet to come.

Still, the good news from Washington seemed to justify the leadership of the Alabama Cooperationists, and Populists of all factions drew closer together after reading the Chandler Report. "C.W.M.," writing in the generally Antifusionist Ozark Banner-Adviser, conceded that "Reese's contest for Morgan's seat is beginning to look real," while J.H. Young of the Butler Choctaw Alliance confessed that he was heartened and relieved. Most Populists discussed the possible results of an investigation with hopeful dignity. Like the editor of the Anniston Alabama Leader, they believed that "the time has come when we must have fair elections in this state." Any jubilation felt by reformist spokesmen, however, was muted by their perception of developments within the growing silver wing of the state Democracy. It was true that the Democratic Party was divided, in the winter of 1896, between the hostile supporters of goldbug Congressman Richard H. Clarke of Mobile and silverite banker Joseph P. Johnston of Birmingham. But careful observers feared that out of the conflict a stronger organization would emerge. Already Johnston, the leading candidate, was making an effective appeal for Populist votes by promising a rigorous count in August and further reform of the election laws at some future date. At the beat level, as Frank Baltzell informed Senator Chandler, Johnston's agents were "untiring" in their efforts "to demoralize and discourage the Populists by appeals to 'return to the home of the
fathers' and [by] urging that there is no hope of honest elections [to be had] from Republicans." Reform orators and journalists were challenging the sincerity of this Democratic change of heart, but the morale of some rank-and-file agrarians had been shaken. Populist leaders, said Baltzell, needed positive assistance from the Senate if they were to prove to waverers "that the undisturbed sway of the ballot-box stuffers shall no longer exist." He added that "you gentlemen . . . who seek to advance this movement can hardly realize how great a factor [the Allen Resolution] will prove in Alabama politics." W. S. Reese, who knew Chandler better than Baltzell did, added stronger words: "We want the [investigative] committee," he wrote. "Without it we will be counted out again."13

While People's Party men assessed the political situation in Alabama, the Allen Resolution was running into difficulties. According to Senate rules, there could be no consideration of the proposal before the minority of the Privileges and Elections Committee had had a chance to reply to the Chandler Report. And Senator George Gray of Delaware, charged with writing the minority opinion, was in no hurry. For over two months Gray deliberated over voluminous records brought to Washington by Governor W. C. Gates and Senator James Pugh of Alabama. At last, in response to Chandler's entreaties, Pugh promised to see to it that the minority report would be delayed no longer. But by this time, Senator Morgan had fallen ill and was said to be recuperating at a resort in Pennsylvania. It was not the practice of the Senate to debate matters involving personal privileges in the
abundance of the member concerned; so Chandler and Allen were forced to accept another period of enforced silence. At length, when Gray had finished his research and Morgan had repaired his health, the Senate was occupied with the consideration of appropriation bills, a species of legislation which took precedence over all but the most important measures. The Democratic strategy of obstruction seemed to be working, thus leaving Reese and the Alabama reformers to work out their common destiny without "interference." They had, at any rate, little choice but to pursue their chosen course.

As they worked toward the Populist and Republican conventions of April 28, Cooperationist leaders were too busy to dwell upon their misfortunes. Joseph Manning in particular set a hectic, productive pace within the state; one moment he was en route from Opelika to Montgomery "on important business," the next swinging through Alexander City on the way to Birmingham. Everywhere he went he urged his listeners to enlist in the battle for political freedom in Alabama. "Why consider the tariff, money question or any other economic issue," he asked, "when the right of a fair vote and a free count does not prevail?" In the midst of his labors, Manning warned the readers of the Ozark Banner-Advertiser that they would have "neither peace nor prosperity until the same rights prevail [in the] South as are enjoyed elsewhere in this country." His prolonged efforts to promote inter-party unity, combined with similar campaigns mounted by W.S. Reese, R.F. Kolb, Frank Baltzell, and A.T. Goodwyn, were beginning to have a marked effect. By mid-April, a majority of Populist newspapers
were actively engaged in recruiting Republican aid in the upcoming elections. Furthermore, the Moseley and Vaughn factions of the Alabama GOP, whose leaders were bitterly planning separate conventions, had reportedly agreed upon the question of fielding a mixed reform ticket. R.A. Moseley, once known as the boss of the Lily White wing of his party, was instrumental in drumming up growing black support for anti-Bourbon coalition politics. In Tallapoosa County, where blacks freely participated in the deliberations of the Republican and Populist parties, a Republican mass meeting praised Moseley and declared its approval of any advantage "that can be had by Cooperation . . . in opposition to the organized . . . Democracy, which has so long denied our party in this state the right of a free ballot and a fair count." In Lee County, where Manning lectured for Cooperation, hundreds of black Republicans turned out to hear him speak. "In Alabama," the young Populist told his friends, "It is not now negro against white man, nor carpetbagger against native white Southerner," but patriotic citizens against Democratic villains. Of course, factional rivalries and personal animosities continued to exist; but as the delegates for the Montgomery conventions of 1896 began to assemble, it was apparent that Manning's work had not been in vain.

Held in McDonald's Opera House, where the Jeffersonian revolt had been inaugurated in 1892, the People's Party convention was remarkable for the smoothness with which the Cooperationists were able to accomplish their aims in the face of articulate opposition. Early in the day, when Reuben Kolb moved the appointment of a committee to confer
with representatives of both Republican gatherings, the motion passed after a heated debate between Joseph Manning and fiery Gus Hobson of the Tuscaloosa Journal. Yet Hobson, Grattan B. Grove, and other Antifusionists accepted defeat gracefully, possibly because the confident majority leadership made no attempt to limit discussion or railroad a program through. In the afternoon, while the first of several Populist-Republican conferences was proceeding, Manning and Reese recounted the progress of the Allen Resolution and emphasized what the passage of that revolutionary measure could mean for the South. Reese conveyed Chandler’s pledge that an investigative committee would come to Alabama, and reported a prediction made by Populist Senator Marion Butler: "If you turn your backs on the Republican Party who [sic] helped us in North Carolina, you can expect them to turn their backs upon you." At six o’clock the delegates were addressed by R.A. Moseley, who promised that his organization would make no demands if the Populists stood steadfast in the fight for honest elections. William Vaughn’s followers, now including a majority of the Republican state committee, sent word that they could not negotiate until later that night. No one knew for certain, but it was likely that the price of their assistance would be greater than that asked by Moseley. Meanwhile the agrarians, who still had to make nominations and adopt a platform, adjourned for supper in a generally harmonious mood.

During the evening session the convention named a slate of candidates, leaving two slots open for Republicans. For Governor the Populists nominated A.T. Goodwyn, a forceful campaigner who had
recently added to his laurels by winning a long-standing fifth district congressional contest. After choosing their standard-bearers the delegates voted, appropriately, for a platform which recognized "the supremacy of political liberty over all questions that can come before the people of this state." When the normal order of business was finished, many participants remained in the Opera House awaiting word from the nearby Vaughn convention. It was, however, long after midnight before the wrangling McKinleyites agreed to support Goodwyn in exchange for the proffered offices; then, they nominated Republican Cooperationists W.H. Smith, Jr., for Attorney General and J.A. Grimmett for Secretary of State. The fatigued Populists had gone to bed, but the next morning a hastily assembled meeting endorsed the action of the Vaughn GOP. Though neither party approved unanimously of what had been done, "cooperation" was a reality.

Soon, it appeared that even the Antifusionists were pleased with the nominations of Smith and Grimmett. Both Republican candidates had worked for Kolb in 1892 and 1894. Both, in addition, stated that they would uphold the Populists' state platform regardless of the monetary stance of the national GOP. These, admitted the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, were terms better than "the antis had been told they would have to compromise on." Gus Hobson, who had been excoriating Republicans for months, said of Grimmett and Smith: "The truth . . . is that they are Populists and don't know it." Jere Dennis of the mildly Antifusionist Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era noted more realistically: "In fusing with the Republicans [we] have given up none of our principle, but [have] mere-
ly proposed to give them two state offices in return for their hundred thousand votes." Yet factional leaders understood clearly the nature of the contest ahead, despite their show of optimism. Linked with the GOP in Alabama and the North, the Cooperationist ticket was vulnerable to "lost cause" tactics. Joseph F. Johnston, in fact, had already swept the Democratic primaries with a combination of free silver oratory and traditional appeals to racial and sectional prejudice. By April, Johnston's much-publicized guarantee of honest elections had been eclipsed by his determination to "maintain a government ... fair and just to all under the control of the white men of Alabama." If the People's Party were to "stand by Goodwyn and Cooperation," as Joseph Manning urged, then individual Populists must be prepared to wage an aggressive campaign of bipartisan, interracial unification.

One of the chief liabilities of Populist-Republican fusion, J.M. Whiteshead wrote in the fall of 1895, was the fact that "the Republican Party is overwhelmingly a negro party." The Greenville editor's judgement was confirmed shortly after the Montgomery conventions, as one Democratic sheet after another condemned the "unholy alliance" of black and white "Repopnigs." Some journals, like the Jacksonville Republican, fulminated over the prospect of black officeholding and other forms of "negro domination." Others joined the Huntsville Mercury in a louder hue and cry when it was discovered that A.T. Goodwyn, soon after being sworn in as a congressman, had voted to seat black Republican contestant George W. Murray of South Carolina. Pro-Johnston editors demanded that Goodwyn be replaced on the Populist ticket, and subsequently, began publishing the testimonies of "distinguished" citizens who had
decided to leave the People's Party rather than associate with Republicans of either color. The Cooperationists had sold themselves, one such ex-reformer assured the Ashland Clay County Advance, to "proven" enemies of "Democracy and Southern interest." Many rank-and-file Populists and Republicans, on the other hand, saw through the machinations of the "Organized" press and wrote letters questioning the motives of Goodwyn's detractors. Of all these agrarian essayists none was more perceptive, or more brutally candid, than "A Black Man," who undertook to instruct the readers of the Ozark Banner-Advertiser:

First, the Democratic headlines are trying to make the negro the leading issue of the day... in order to turn the weak-kneed and unlettered Populists back to the... Democratic Party, which they see is gone world without end unless they can raise prejudice between the two [reform] parties, and scare the colored man back to themselves.

Most People's Party spokesmen faced the "race question" squarely, if less directly. Joseph Manning, who in all his peregrinations had never ceased advocating an interracial union among farmers, chose to attack Democratic pretensions to racial purity at the weakest point. The idea that black rule would follow a Cooperationist victory was preposterous, he said, and continued:

Are not those men who met in Montgomery... capable of preserving the peace and promoting the interests of both white and black much better than the organized Democracy, which has for two [elections] robbed the negro of his vote in the Black Belt, [in order] to count out the vote of the whites in the white counties?...

There is not a black man in Alabama who has been nominated by [our] movement for any office... The colored voters in Alabama ask but the right to a voice at the polls, and do not want their votes counted differently [from] the way they are cast.
The Ozark Banner-Advertiser agreed with Manning about the impossibility of "negro domination." At the height of the Goodwyn-Johnston race, the influential Wiregrass journal observed that

The negroes are not asking for office. They want justice. They want the right to work for the betterment of their race... We have no fear of live negroes. There are ghosts of dead negroes in Dallas County, [however], ... who are snatched from their graves by sacrilegious hands to perpetuate the Democratic Party in Alabama.35

Obviously, parts of the statements made by Manning and E.M. Johnson of the Banner-Advertiser were intended to soothe the fears of a racist white voting public; neither man told the complete story of black participation at all levels of the 1896 campaigns. One anonymous black man, indeed, served on Goodwyn's state central committee, while Tallapoosa and Russell County Populists reserved "the important and lucrative office of coroner" for Negro candidates. In Russell and probably in other predominantly black counties, blacks worked as beat and precinct committeemen.36 More significant, perhaps, than these modest steps toward equality were the manner in which rank-and-file black Populists and Republicans asserted themselves at political functions, and the willingness with which white reformers accepted the influence of Negroes. After a Cooperationist "love feast" in Alexander City had attracted "14 Populites, 16 Democrats, and 30 Republicans, colored," the white journalist in charge vowed never "to inquire if a voter be white or black, [a] Republican or People's Party man." In the same vein the Banner-Advertiser predicted that "the negro will refuse to have his vote trifled with," and proclaimed:
"We have fused with the Republicans because we want the vote of every negro in Alabama next August." The boldest proponent of black rights, though, was a writer in the Populist Dothan Searchlight, who advised sharecroppers to resist efforts to frighten them into voting for Johnston. When threatened with eviction or violence, he said, black farmers should act in concert:

Every mother's son of you put on your coats and quit then and there. . . . You are a free people and have a perfect right to express your honest convictions at the polls. . . . They think that you are a set of ignorant fools that they can pull around by the nose at their own sweet will. Are you going to allow them to do it this time, when you have got a law to protect you?

Five years earlier, white agrarians had denounced a cotton pickers' strike organized by the Colored Farmer's Alliance. But the author of the Searchlight article, like a number of Alabamians, had undergone an internal revolution since class-oriented politics had come to the state in 1892. The grim assurance with which he reminded black tenants that the planters "can't do without your labor and they know it" further suggests the bitterness of the ongoing fight for economic and political dominance. All in all, Alabama Populists made a strong appeal for solidarity against the "Oligarchy." Privately, however, People's Party leaders feared that the course of events was slipping beyond their control.

As the threat posed by the Allen Resolution receded, the Johnston forces counter-attacked with all the arrogance of an aroused, entrenched machine. In mid-May, Judge A.E. "Pet" Caffee of Black Belt Lowndes County declared his willingness to manufacture votes en masse. Given
the record of the Democracy, Populists could only believe that the
Judge was telling the truth. Even more unsettling was a widely
credited rumor that Johnston was preparing to unite the Democratic
Party in support of "the Mississippi Plan." After the August elections,
said M.W. Whatley, the new "Governor's" supporters in the legislature
would "call a constitutional convention, and disfranchise the negroes
and thousands of whites." Such news undermined the confidence
of reformers and turned their thoughts back to the U.S. Senate,
for only the Federal government was strong enough to deal effectively
with constitutional disfranchisement. "I know," W.S. Reese wrote to
Senator Chandler, "that the Democratic Ex[ecutive] Committee are only
waiting for Congress to adjourn [so] there is no danger of the Allen
Resolution . . . They will control, through the Black Belt, the
legislature, and away we go forever into their clutches, forever and
forever." For nearly two years Reese, Manning, Kolb, Baltzell,
Goodwyn, and Skaggs had pinned their best hopes upon the Congressional
Strategy; they could not continue to hope much longer without sub-
stantial assistance.

On May 18, William V. Allen pressed his Alabama resolution upon a
thinly attended Senate. Several prospective friends of ballot reform
were absent and a prestigious appropriations bill was next on the
calendar, but Allen dismissed Chandler's pointed requests that the Reese-
Morgan contest be taken up at a later date. Instead the Nebraskan, after
a good deal of preliminary discussion, moved that the Senate begin de-
bate upon the Allen Resolution. Apparently, he wanted to force Senate
Republicans to take a stand. Yet his action resulted only in a disas-
tous setback to the cause of fair elections in Alabama and the South. Two Populists and four New England Republicans, including Allen and Chandler, voted to open the debate, and forty-one senators voted to preserve the conventional order of business. Allen bitterly reproached the Republicans who had opposed his motion, only to be rebuked in turn by conservatives who claimed that the Allen Resolution would have violated the spirit of federalism. While Republican leader John Sherman of Ohio nodded in approval, Texas Democrat Roger Q. Mills summarized the majority opinion:

Where do you go to ascertain whether the form of government . . . of a state is republican? By an inspection of the charter which creates the state government, and by nothing else; and you cannot go to see whether that has been correctly administered, because it belongs to the government itself to determine that question.

A few days after the May 18 vote, a stunned Warren S. Reese wrote Chandler to thank him for his efforts on behalf of "our honest sons of toil" and to ask him what had gone wrong. For Reese, as for the many Alabama Populists who had believed in the power and friendship of the national GOP, the situation wore an air of unreality. "There is something about the whole matter I do not comprehend," he said. "Is there no hereafter in this Congress or the next on this subject?" The Senator from New Hampshire replied, with the brevity of one who has learned to accept the defeat of a good cause all too easily, that even "a vote at a better time would not have been successful. Some Republicans would have failed us." Reformist leaders reached the same conclusion, but in a less objective frame of mind. "In plain light of day," thundered the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune, "the
Senate has descended to so low a moral level that nothing which would disturb or check its descent need be expected." Nor did the agrarian spokesmen forget their painful sense of abandonment. More that three decades later, Joseph Manning's recollections of the Reese-Morgan case were heavily tinged with anger and disgust:

Flagrant as was [the original] election outrage, hopeless as were the people of Alabama as against the domination of the Black Belt fraud-acquired power; although, in fact, the people of the white counties had [been] politically outlawed by the Black Belt count, the Republican United States Senate side-stepped the issue involving the constitutional rights of a people to [a] voice in the election of their representatives.46

In a calmer moment, Manning looked back on the politics of the late nineteenth century and decided that there had been an influential "element of Republicans in the North of the materialistic sort," who were "quite content with their political advantage and were willing to let the Democratic oligarchy have 'theirs'." Modern scholars have agreed that by the 1890's, the Republican Party was turning away from the human-rights issues of the Reconstruction era. The trend had been visible during the battle over the Force Bill, but it was well-developed by the time Ohio Governor William McKinley sought to occupy the White House as "the advance agent of prosperity." The men who represented the great industrial and financial concentrations of the North--Mathew Quay of Pennsylvania, Nelson Aldrich of Rhode Island, Chauncey Depew of New York and Mark Hanna of Ohio--had just succeeded in constructing a safe electoral majority, a kind of political Trust through which they could implement the high-tariff, sound-money policies of the GOP. They were thus in the position, as one writer
The allegiance of the South's convention delegates was still an important factor in presidential nominations, but the expert generalship of Hanna had clinched the support of the so-called "rotten boroughs" long before the Allen Resolution came to a vote. Such was the knowledge vouchsafed to those who wielded real power in terms of money, votes, and influence within the U.S. Senate. The fortunes of a Populist-backed election contest occasioned little concern among the members of what was already referred to as the "Millionaires' Club." In Alabama, where reformers had just learned the futility of their hopes, there were likewise no illusions about what the future would bring. The failure of the Allen Resolution "has certainly been a wet blanket on our cause all over the state," W.S. Reese told Chandler, and added, emotionally:

The Democratic papers are publishing our defeat in double headlines, and it will cause us to lose the state, I fear. It is said by them—'Congress don't care how we manage our state affairs, go ahead Boys, and work the same old racket!' And they are doing it.49

The two and a half weeks following the May debacle were relatively peaceful for Joseph Manning and his friends. During this time the Cooperationists were making plans for the difficult state and national campaigns ahead. By the third week in June Manning had accompanied Reuben Kolb and P.G. Bowman to St. Louis where, by invitation of H.E. Taubeneck, a number of Populists were observing the Republican national convention and working toward the creation of a free silver coalition centered on the People's Party. Despite the importance of Taubeneck's
meetings, the indications are that Manning was more interested in watch­ing the convention, for the Republicans were making decisions which would profoundly affect reform politics in Alabama. In particular the long-dominant Moseley wing of the state GOP was "sat down upon badly" by the Credentials Committee, which recognized the Vaughn delegation instead. Vaughn, as was widely known, was amenable to tactical alliances with Populists; but to Manning it must have seemed that the end of genuine "cooperation" was at hand. "It is plain," he later wrote, that

in as much as Hanna dominated the . . . Republican National Committee, the pro-McKinley contesting delegates were seated . . . Not only was the [old] Republican state organization . . . made unofficial, but district organizations as well . . . It was dis­concerting to the Populist-Republican fusion movement in Alabama to have a Republican state chairman, who had earnestly cooperated with the Populist forces in a vigorous fight for free government, cast into the political discard to serve the exigency of a president­ial nomination. That [, however,] meant nothing to Hanna. 52

On or shortly after June 20, Joseph returned to Alabama ahead of Kolb and Bowman. The Republican convention and the Taubeneck conference, following hard upon the collapse of his Congressional Strategy, marked a watershed in the young reformer's career. Henceforth, with few deviations, he would pursue single-party politics. 53

Intermittently from late June through July, Manning appeared before political meetings preaching what one east Alabaman called "good old Alliance doctrine." In all probability, he had accepted the likelihood of another statewide count-out, but he let it be known that he was available for one of the two Lee County legislative nominations. On
June 24, as a result, Manning and the popular incumbent E.C. Jackson were nominated by acclamation at a mammoth rally held on the Opelika fairgrounds. The 1500 white and 800 black farmers present were manifestly loyal, notwithstanding the unpromising state of the reform movement, and Manning happily described the gathering as "the largest and most enthusiastic ... I ever saw." His decision to seek office in Lee County—where he had developed few ties and would be running entirely on his name—served, at least, to emphasize his determination to stand behind the People's Party. Yet it was an unlucky decision. Within a month, a series of unforeseen events had utterly distracted him from the business of winning an election.

Faced with the shrewd, often brutal campaign of "reunion" mounted by Joseph F. Johnston and his followers, reformers worried that large portions of the state People's Party would be absorbed by the Silver Democracy. Most Populist leaders distrusted Johnston, although such previously stalwart Antifusionist as Philander Morgan and Henry P. Burress were tacitly supporting the Democratic state ticket as early as June. But after the Democrats nominated the youthful silvercite William Jennings Bryan for president on July 10, Manning recognized "a change in the political situation, almost overnight." Well before the July 22 date set for the Populists' St. Louis convention, Bryan had become the darling of William V. Allen, James B. Weaver, and other highly-placed fusionists. Soon the excitement spread to Alabama, where a diverse group of Cooperationists and erstwhile Antifusionists including Reuben Kolb, P.G. Bowman, and S.M. Adams embraced the opportunity to mend
fences with the "party of the fathers." The majority of Cooperationist spokesmen, however, were angrily opposed to Populist-Democratic fusion at any level or under any circumstances. As a rule, these reformers bore Bryan no ill will and favored the unlimited coinage of silver; yet as Manning recalled, there were "issues which precluded their support of a Democratic candidate."

Manning was one of a great many Populists who were concerned primarily with the fight for "political liberty" in 1896. Bryan's chief lieutenant in Alabama, they knew, would of necessity be Joseph Johnston, a man who had not disassociated himself from the traditions of Bourbon class rule. "I will not vote with those who robbed me," Frank Baltzell told W.E. Chandler. "I want to punish them; besides, I do not want . . . to be represented in this state by ballot-box stuffers, boasting of their infamy and exercising every species of petty tyranny over those who opposed them." An obscure Midroader, T.B. Bickley of Spring Valley, warned Senator Marion Butler that fusion with old-party silverites "will destroy us as a party, and give to others the ripening, golden fruit of years of thought, hard toil and self-sacrifices." Bickley was heart sick over the threatened adulteration of the Omaha Platform, but he was likewise insistent that Alabama reformers would oppose "even such a man as W.J. Bryan, when associated with a party of such infamous record" as the "unscrupulous, arrogant and intolerant 'Democracy.'" State and presidential politics were thus inextricably tangled as agrarian leaders prepared to attend the Populist national convention. Shortly before making his second journey to St. Louis within a month, Manning captured the defiant mood of the
Cooperationists-turned-Midroaders with a grim sarcasm. "I will not trust those who have robbed me of my crown of sovereignty," he announced, "to save me from 'the crown of thorns' and 'the cross of gold.'"60

The St. Louis convention was described by the Ozark Banner-Advertiser as "four days of heat, turmoil and unlimited oratory."61 Beyond such generalizations, coverage in the state reform press was selective, chiefly because local journalists focused upon the actions of Midroaders and fusionists in the fifty-four man Alabama delegation. As was the case in the convention at large, the two sides differed passionately over every item of business; nor were their conflicts merely verbal. In the contest for permanent chairman, according to the Anniston Alabama Leader, Alabamians voted for Maine Midroader James E. Campion over William V. Allen, 29 1/2 to 24 1/2. Allen triumphed, though, by an overall vote of 756 to 564, whereupon "some Bryan men in the delegation attempted to carry the flag of Alabama in the procession, but was [sic] prevented by the Anti-Bryan men, . . . [and] in the scuffle the staff was broken."62 Thereafter, fusionist Reuben Kolb and Straightout Congressman M.W. Howard were conspicuous opponents in the see-saw of events which led, first, to the nomination of Tom Watson for vice president, and finally to the nomination of William Jennings Bryan for president.63 The experienced fusionist Marion Butler had hoped that the choice of a geographically and ideologically balanced ticket would unite the convention, but there is no indication that the Alabamians' tempers or any other tempers had
cooled by the time the sessions were over. Indeed, one-fourth of all
the delegates, including many of the Alabama contingent, persisted to
the last in voting for Midroad presidential candidate S.F. Norton of
Chicago. They did so, said a writer in the Dadeville Tallapoosa New
Era, because Chairman Allen could or would not say "whether Mr. Bryan
would accept their nomination" upon the terms offered. In point of
fact, everyone present at St. Louis knew that Bryan had specifically
affirmed his loyalty to the Democratic Party and to Democratic vice-
presidential candidate Arthur S. Sewall. Consequently, Midroaders
were disturbed when the fusionist majority voted plenary powers to the
new Populist national executive committee, even though the "avowed
object" was to enable the party leadership "to substitute the name of
Norton for that of Bryan in case the latter declines to accept." It was
feared, reported the New Era correspondent, that the committee might
tamper with Tom Watson's nomination, in which case, he wrote, true
Populists

will conclude [that] if present conditions must continue,
it were better that they should be perpetuated under Mc-
Kinley, . . . who stands in the open as a defender of the
gold standard, rather than under Bryan, who such action
would indicate, was simply to be used as a tool.65

Manning remained in the background at the Populist convention.

He caucused with the Midroaders and resisted the blandishments of Demo-
cratic fusionist agents, yet he had little enthusiasm for internecine
struggles. It is probable, too, that he did not bother to campaign
for his legislative seat in the few days between the end of the St. Louis
meetings and the August 3 state elections. Like Goodwyn, Reese, and other
reformers who had been on the road and on the hustings for over a year, he was completely "fagged out." 66 The election returns, as they came trickling in, were not likely to revive the Cooperationists' spirits.

In the general election, Johnston defeated Goodwyn by an official count of 128,541 to 89,290 votes, carrying in the process no fewer than nineteen black and twenty-one white counties. Eleven reformist state senators were elected, but such prominent Populists as Manning, S.M. Adams, and Jere Dennis lost contests for the lower chamber. For Manning, the most humiliating aspect of defeat was not the manner in which Democratic newspapers trumpeted the news of his downfall across the state, but the fact that he had polled the fewest votes among four legislative candidates from Lee County. Agrarian journalists blamed an allegedly apathetic Lee County GOP for the loss. Upon reflection, it would be more accurate to say that Manning, as a controversial outsider clearly preoccupied with larger affairs, was never a serious contender. 67 But whatever explanations they offered for local misfortunes, Alabama Populists were unanimous in believing that Goodwyn, like Kolb before him, had been counted out. Frank Bultzell charged that Democratic managers in the Black Belt had resorted to "frauds more widespread than in any previous election," and some agrarians spoke of armed resistance to the "fraudocratic" machines. Despite the threats of a few rhetorical revolutionists, however, most Populists bitterly accepted the inevitability of Johnston's triumph. Judging by the available evidence, A.T. Goodwyn never seriously considered filing a contest under the election laws of 1895, nor was there a widespread demand that he do so. 68 Manning, who realized that People's Party men were "disheartened" and divided among themselves, con-
cluded that the Goodwyn-Johnston race had "unmistakably shown, yes proven, that the Southern Democratic Party had the power to perpetuate its control through fraud." 69

Within a few days after the August 3 election, William Vaughn claimed to have "heard constantly from leading Populites that they will assist McKinley and . . . support the Republican electoral ticket." 70 During the succeeding month several influential Cooperationists, notably Joseph Manning and Warren S. Reese, earnestly pondered the question of joining the GOP outright. It was obvious to both men that, barring an incredible upsurge of support for Bryan and Watson, only the national Republican Party possessed the strength or the slightest inclination to check the power of the Alabama Democracy. They knew the chances of Federal intervention were slim, and yet W.E. Chandler had advised the Populists not to give up hope. "The country is going overwhelmingly Republican," he told Reese, adding: "[P]erhaps that prospect may enable you to win a victory." 71 The gold-standard ardor of the McKinley Republicans was a matter of secondary importance to such reformers as Manning and Reese. In Manning's words, the Cooperationists wanted "to rebuke the repression of the people" before turning to financial issues. 72 Ironically, even the Black Belt Bourbons seemed to be conspiring to further Republican reform interests in Alabama. In August and September, ex-Governor Thomas Jones led hundreds of anti-Bryan Democrats into the newly formed "National Democratic Party." This reactionary movement enjoyed the backing of the Montgomery Advertiser and the Mobile Register,
and attracted to its ranks, as W.S. Hess, Jr., wrote, the men who "control the capital of the state, mould and manage public sentiment, ... and to a very great extent say what shall and what shall not be done." As members of a minority party and as tacit allies of the goldbug GOP, National Democratic leaders joined Republican and Populist spokesmen in demanding fair treatment at the polls; thus political events in Alabama had come full circle. But for all that political expediency dictated a union among disillusioned agrarians and the powerful forces surrounding McKinley's candidacy, many People's Party men were reluctant to leave the Alliance-Populist community. For Manning, the need to choose sides was particularly pressing. He must make up his mind before September 3, when the Populist executive committee would meet to select Bryan-Watson electors. A week prior to the meeting he was still undecided.

While Manning was considering his next move, relations between the pro-Bryan and anti-Bryan factions of the People's Party were deteriorating. Kolb, Bowman, and the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune were trying hard to arrange a joint electoral ticket with the Johnston Democrats. Chairman C.B. Deans and a majority of the Populist executive committee might have accepted some form of electoral fusion, but the Democratic committee was silent and S.W. John, who acted as a liaison between the Bryan Democracy and the Populists, offered the latter nothing more than a warm welcome back to the fold. Meanwhile M.W. Howard and G.B. Crowe, furious at the very idea of carrying on negotiations with the red-handed "fraudocrats," had issued a statement characterizing Kolb and Bowman as "old bosses" willing to work both the GOP
and the Democracy for as much money as possible. Kolb's efforts to
raise funds from a variety of sources had been the subject of unjust
criticism in the Democratic press for years. It must have been
particularly painful for him to read similar charges of corruption in
the Butler Choctaw Alliance and other agrarian journals. Plainly,
the intra-party quarrels which followed the St. Louis convention
and the state elections of 1896 had reduced the reform movement in
Alabama to a state of helplessness and hopelessness. The committeemen who assembled in Birmingham on September 3 represented the mere
shell of a political party.

After great interior struggle, Manning had surrendered to the
logic of events. When his name was called he stood up and announced
his resignation from the People's Party. "I have made up my mind,"
he said briefly, "to support McKinley, and therefore I have aligned
myself with the Republican Party." It was a terrible moment for the
young man, personally and politically. He had cut himself off from an
organization which was, in part, his creation, and he had opened
himself to the ridicule of both reformist and Democratic editors. Soon
he would read that he was a Republican "parrot," one of those "chirping
lads...who preserve a suspicious attention to the political weather-
vane." Now, for the first time, he would face the charge of venality,
the accusation that he "had gone over to the Rads [because] there's
something in it." The gibes were harder to take because his
financial affairs were uncertain. Soon, he would be forced to sell off
his household furniture in order to repay loans and debts incurred in
his travels. By the spring of 1897 he would indeed be an applicant for
"pie" from the Republican Party. For the moment, though, he concentrated upon working for the GOP in east Alabama. Within a month he was joined in his new affiliation by Warren S. Reese, W.S. Reese, Jr., and Mobile Populist Guy Sibley. The People's Party was disintegrating, and a political epoch was drawing to a close.

In November Reuben Kolb and a large number of Populists cast their ballots for Bryan and Sewall, and the Democratic count swelled to 107,137 votes. The McKinley-Hobart slate finished a distant second with 54,737 votes; the Bryan-Watson ticket polled a dismal 24,089 votes. Thus the presidential election of 1896 marked a return, almost, to the lop-sided Bourbon victories of the 1880's. Many observers predicted that the Democracy would recover its former primacy. From the standpoint of the Cooperationists, the autumn returns were anti-climatic. The hopes of 1894-1896 had long since faded, and reformers in all parties had begun to analyze the breakdown of the Congressional Strategy. It was apparent, first, that the Cooperationists—in desperation or great ignorance—had put their faith in politicians who did not reflect and could not alter the temper of the U.S. Senate. Likewise, they had overestimated the effect of Joseph Manning's speeches before the caste-conscious urban reform leagues of the North. Manning had scored a publicity coup in New York, but he had not altered middle-class public opinion. His audiences applauded but they were, ideologically, worlds apart from the Populist Evangel. Finally, the Alabama reformers had learned anew to fear the pitfalls of fusion. After the frustrating
bargaining of the summer and fall of 1896, Manning joined the Republican Party, Kolb rejoined the Democracy, and Frank Baltzell remained in the People's Party, each man convinced that he could work best from within a stable, unified organization.81

Despite the utter defeat of the Cooperationists' strategy, it is appropriate to ask: What other course could Manning and the People's Party have followed from 1894-1896? Basically, the Populists had two alternatives; either they must topple the Oates administration by force of arms or, less dramatically, strike a bargain with the Johnston Democrats. Kolb and his followers considered both courses. Manning and a majority of Third Party men knew, however, that an attempted rebellion would only call forth a devastating display of force, while any fusion or cooperation with Democrats would lead inevitably to the death of the People's Party. By urging a double-pronged alliance with the weak Alabama GOP and the strong national GOP, Manning was trying to preserve the future independence of the agrarian movement, keep the peace, and secure fair elections. In the end, everything went wrong. His Republican allies were cast down, his most dangerous Democratic enemies were exalted, and his Populist colleagues were unable to work together smoothly. Manning and the Cooperationists were neither wizards nor saints. They could not direct the course of events, nor could they insure that future generations would revere their example and fight on for the grand principle of civil liberty for all men. Yet they were bold enough, in the aftermath of defeat, to take thought for the time to come. So it was that for many Populists and
Republicans—emphatically, for Joseph Manning—the fight was far from over in 1896.
Footnotes to Chapter VIII


3. Manning, Fadeout, 35-36, 96-97; for information on the problems of politicians who were both party loyalists and civil rights advocates, see Welch, George Frisbie Hoar, 2-4, 16-25, 146-148, 161-162.

4. For information on William V. Allen, see Goodwyn, Democratic Promise, 392-401, 474-477. Goodwyn refers to Allen, who was remarkably ignorant of the Omaha Platform, as "the archetype of a strange new breed of third party politician who was a Populist in name only." Reese's advisers in Washington believed that a Populist should be the sponsor of a Populist contest, and so Allen made a number of speeches and motions concerning the Alabama frauds throughout the Fifty-third and Fifty-Fourth Congresses. It was common knowledge that Chandler was the real manager and that Chandler and Allen were not on good terms. See the Montgomery Advertiser, December 20, 1894, and W.E. Chandler to W.S. Reese, June 3, 1896, in the Chandler Papers.

5. Allen was one of the leading actors in an episode which may have poisoned relations between Senate Republicans and Populists from the start of the Fifty-fourth Congress. Forty-four Republicans held seats in the Senate—one short of a majority. The six Populist senators, therefore, were in a position to determine which of the "old parties" would organize the chamber. To the dismay of those who had hoped for a Populist-Republican alliance, Allen and other Populists approached the Democratic side with an impractical proposal for organization "on a silver basis." Eventually, the Republicans organized the Senate, but Chandler and Hoar were thoroughly angry with Allen. See the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, January 9, 1896, the Opelika Industrial News, January 9, 1896, and the Congressional Record, 54th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 5, 4419-4421.


10. Key sections of the Chandler Report are printed in the Anniston *Alabama Leader*, March 19, 1896, the Ozark *Banner-Advertiser*, March 19, 1896, the Raleigh *Caucasian*, March 19, 1896, and the Butler Choctaw *Alliance*, March 24, 1896. The Allen Resolution was made Senate Order of Business No. 445; for the Allen Resolution as reported by Chandler's committee, see the *Cong. Rec.*, 54th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 3, 2366.

11. Ozark *Banner-Advertiser*, March 5, 1896, the Butler Choctaw *Alliance*, March 24, April 7, 1896, and the Anniston *Alabama Leader*, March 5, 1896.

12. Rogers, *One-Gallused Rebellion*, 298, 302-304. Johnston's supporters controlled the Democratic state executive committee, which in January "let down the bars" by inviting black and white "voters, irrespective of past political associations" to participate in the Democratic county primaries.


17. J.C. Manning to the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, in the April 23, 1896, issue.


19. Alexander City Outlook, April 10, 24, 1896, the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune, July 2, 1896, Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 306, 308-309, and Hackney, Populism to Progressivism, 93. For information on Manning's activities in Lee County, see the Opelika Industrial News, June 18, 25, 1896.

20. J.C. Manning to the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, in the April 23, 1896, issue.


24. Ozark Banner-Advertiser, April 23, 1896, the Ashland People's Party Advocate, February 12, 1896, and Mustin, "Albert Taylor Goodwyn," 57-58. At about the same time, the Republican contestants W.F. and T.W. Aldrich were seated from the fourth and ninth districts. Clearly, the downfall of three Democratic incumbents bolstered the prestige of the Cooperationist leaders. See Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 287-289.

25. Ozark Banner-Advertiser, May 7, 1896. In addition to a free silver plank, the Populist platform contained a tariff plank worded so as to lure conventional Republicans into the Cooperationist orbit: "We favor a tariff for revenue, so adjusted as to protect . . . the farmers and labor in our shops, mines, factories and mills, and their products against foreign pauper labor." See Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 309-310.

Or a rk B a n n e r- A d v e rtis e r. May 7, 1896*

28. Tuscaloosa Journal, quoted in the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, May 14, 1896; see also the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, May 28, 1896. Hobson was especially fulsome in describing Jack Bingham of Talladega County, the Populist nominee for State Treasurer and a convert from Republicanism, as a "dyed-in-the-wool, rock-ribbed, self-cocking, stem-winding, hair-trigger, double-backaction, middle-of-the-road Populist." J.H. Young, in the Butler Choctaw Alliance, May 5, 1896, rejoiced that both Smith and Grimmett were bimetalists, and referred to the latter as "a Republican who holds principle above party, an honest man, a clean man, and a man above reproach."

29. Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 303-304.


31. J.M. Whitehead to the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, in the October 7, 1895, issue. Whitehead remarked that he liked and admired many Negroes personally. "Nevertheless," he continued, "the prejudice against the negro as a ruling force in the state, is as strong now as it ever was, and prejudice must be respected."

32. Jacksonville Republican, and the Huntsville Mercury, both quoted in the Alexander City Outlook, July 10, 1896, and A.A. Willoughby to the Ashland Clay County Advance, in the June 19, 1896, issue. Willoughby noted revealing reasons for his return to the Democratic fold: "I have not taken any demonstrative interest in politics for several years, feeling meanwhile that the People's Party represented the principles I felt that we needed; but since [then], . . . I am thoroughly convinced that they are but too willing to sacrifice principle for office." For other examples of editorial race-baiting, see the Alexander City Outlook, May 8, June 5, 19, 26, 1896, and the Evergreen Courant, May 15, 1896. For information on the Murray contest case, see Maurice Christopher, America's Black Congressmen (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1971), 118-122.


34. J.C. Manning to the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, in the May 14, 1896, issue.


37. Alexander City Outlook, June 5, 1896, the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, July 2, 1896, and the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, May 21, 1896. The Populist who presided in Alexander City was Jere Dennis, an editor of the Tallapoosa New Era. In the July 9, 1896, issue of the journal, Dennis gave the following interesting account of Democratic activity: "When our county primary was being held, . . . Democrats were around our voting places in droves begging the negro not to vote our ticket, . . . and then in the same breath rushing around to our white Populists and saying, 'Just look at what your leaders are doing! They have turned everything over to the niggers! Now, you can't stand that.'"

38. Dothan Searchlight, quoted in the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, May 21, 1896, and Gaither, Blacks and the Populist Revolt, 15-16.

39. Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 305, 313.

40. M.W. Whatley to W.E. Chandler, May 2, 1896, in the Chandler Papers. The implications of the "Mississippi Plan" were thoroughly discussed in the weeks after the Populist convention. The Ozark Banner-Advertiser, April 30, 1896, noted: "A majority of the disfranchised voters would be negroes, 'tis true, but granting this, they are guaranteed the rights of citizenship, . . . and should retain the right of suffrage." The Democratic advocates of a constitutional convention, said the Banner-Advertiser, were a "horde of aristocratic demagogues, [who] are laying deep and well-concocted plans." Following his election in August of 1896, Johnston supported an abortive movement to call a constitutional convention. See Hackney, Populism to Progressivism, 151-152, 157, 164-170.

41. W.S. Reese to W.E. Chandler, May 1, 1896, in the Chandler Papers.

42. Cong. Rec., 54th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 6, 5342-5345. The four senators who voted with Allen and Chandler were Republicans W.P. Frye of Maine, Jacob Gallinger of New Hampshire and Justin Morrill of Vermont, and Populist William Peffer of Kansas. Other senators who would have voted for the Allen Resolution, had they been present, included G.P. Hoar of Massachusetts, and Marion Butler and Jeter Pritchard of North Carolina. In an apologetic letter to Reese, Chandler explained that Allen had been too "anxious to get the Republicans in a hole, [and] . . . too willing to bring on a vote at the wrong time—when Republicans would not vote to supersede an appropriations bill." See W.E. Chandler to W.S. Reese, June 2, 1896, in the Chandler Papers.

43. Cong. Rec., 54th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 6, 5344-5345.


46. Manning, Fadeout, 36.

47. J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 13, 1928, in the NAACP Papers.

48. Josephson, The Politicos, 444-445, Hirshon, Farewell to the Bloody Shirt, 143-170, 236-246, Welch, George Frisbie Hoar, 162, 164, Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 313-328, and Dorothy Canfield Fowler, John Coint Spooner, Defender of Presidents (New York: University Publishers, 1961), 200. In Farewell to the Bloody Shirt, 249, Hirshon quotes a letter written by veteran Senator John Coint Spooner, a few years after the Reese-Morgan affair: "The interest of the Republicans of the United States in an honest ballot, in maintaining the rights of citizenship, and in holding sacred the pledge of Abraham Lincoln's proclamation to the colored men is dead, or in a slumber too deep for us to arouse it."


50. Opelika Industrial News, May 21, 28, 1896. The Cooperationists' Central Committee held a "closed door" meeting in Birmingham on May 21 for the purpose of mapping out strategy.

51. Atlanta Constitution, quoted in the Opelika Industrial News, June 18, 1896; also see the Alexander City Outlook, June 19, 1896. The Outlook editor assumed that the "Alabama trio of political bushwhackers" had gone to seek Republican boodle. In Democratic Promise, 472, Lawrence Goodwyn provides a concise analysis of "Taubeck's projected agenda" for the reform movement: "The Republicans were to nominate a doctrinaire apostle of 'sound money,' thus alienating 'silver Republicans' rallied behind Colorado's Senator Edward Teller, while the Democrats were to follow suit and thereby estrange their own silverites. The Populists were then to gather up the disaffected of both parties . . . ."

52. Montgomery Advertiser, quoted in the Eufaula Times and News, June 18, 1896, and Manning Fadeout, 42-43. There was speculation at the time that William Vaughn and his lieutenant William Youngblood would repudiate the fusionist agreement of April 28. Such was not the case, though, and the Goodwyn ticket was endorsed 16-9 at a subsequent
meeting of the GOP state executive committee. See the Opelika Industrial News, June 18, July 2, 1896, and G.B. Deans to T.A. Street, July 2, 1896, in the Street Papers.


54. Opelika Industrial News, June 11, 18, 25, 1896, and the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune, June 11, 25, July 2, 1896. A.T. Goodwyn was the featured speaker at the June 24 rally. It is difficult to say how much advance planning went into Manning's legislative race, or whether he campaigned vigorously in late June and early July. None of Manning's Lee County speeches survive, nor does he mention the contest in his later autobiographical works. In any event, the Johnston-Goodwyn fight and the subsequent excitement over Bryan's presidential candidacy captured the attention of J.R. Rogers, editor of the Industrial News, so that coverage of local politics suffered. For more information on Lee County politics, see Owen, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, II, 862-864; for information on E.C. Jackson, who was seeking his fourth straight term as a member of the state House of Representatives, see the Opelika Industrial News, June 27, 1895.


56. Manning, Fadeout, 9, the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, July 23, 1896, and the Opelika Industrial News, July 23, 1896. See also George L. Burr to Joseph Wheeler, June 2, 1896, in the Wheeler Papers. Burr predicted that the Democrats would "put up a Free Coinage candidate who will be endorsed by the People's Party element."

57. Manning, Fadeout, 10, and the Alexander City Outlook, July 17, 1896. Manning sent Bryan a telegram of congratulation, which led the Outlook editor to hope that Alabama's Populist leaders would soon endorse the Democratic nominee. But the telegram represented chiefly Manning's pleasure in defeat of the Cleveland Democracy.


59. T.B. Bickley to Marion Butler, August 7, 1896, in the Marion Butler Papers, Southern Historical Collection. During the Populists' St. Louis convention, Butler was named to replace H.E. Taubeneck as National Chairman.
60. Ozark Banner-Advertiser, July 23, 1896.

61. Ibid., July 30, 1896.

62. Anniston Alabama Leader, July 25, 1896. Many Populist editors selected much of their convention material from longer articles in national journals. The Alabama Leader story, for example, is condensed from an account published in the Atlanta Constitution.

63. For detailed accounts of the convention, see Woodward, Tom Watson, 294-301, Durden, The Climax of Populism, 23-44, and Goodwyn, Democratic Promise, 479-492. For the doings of the Alabama delegation, see the Anniston Alabama Leader, July 29, 1896, the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, July 30, 1896, and the Evergreen Conecuh Record, July 30, 1896. The rivalry between Howard—who gave the nominating speech for vice-presidential candidate Tom Watson—and Kolb was especially marked during the presidential nominations of July 25. On that turbulent day the convention seemed to boil down to a shouting match, in which Howard led a band of Midlanders against the Bryanites who occupied the speaker’s platform. At one point, after James Field of Virginia moved that Bryan’s nomination be made unanimous, the convention erupted in a near-riot; order was restored and the roll call of states resumed when R.P. Kolb took over the podium. Evidently, Kolb retained his power to lead men.

64. Goodwyn, Democratic Promise 484, 488-490, and the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, August 6, 1896. For another critical assessment of Bryan’s "Straightout" Democratic stance, see the Ashland People’s Party Advocate, August 14, 1896.

65. Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, August 6, 1896.


67. Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 314-317, the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, August 5, 13, 1896, the Montgomery Advertiser, August 8, 1896, and the Butler Choctaw Alliance, August 11, 1896. See especially the Original MS Returns, 1896 Lee County Elections, ADAH. In Lee County, Democrats R.P. Barnes and E.H. Baker received 2327 and 2256 votes; Populists E.C. Jackson and J.C. Manning received 1821 and 1592 votes. From the summer of 1895 to the fall of 1896, it is doubtful that Manning spent more than two weeks at a time in the Opelika area. It is therefore safe to assume that he was running entirely on his name. Had the Cooperationists’ strategy been successful, Manning might have been swept into office on a tide of reformist enthusiasm, but by election day many Populists were discouraged and stayed away from the polls. For examples of Democratic comment, see the Columbiana Shelby Sentinel, August 6,
1896, the Alexander City Outlook, August 7, 1896, and the Ashland Clay County Advance, August 7, 1896. The latter was relatively polite: "Joe is a daisy [sic], but the Democracy of Lee prevented the legislature from having to listen to Joe's mouth."

68. Ozark Banner-Advertiser, August 6, 1896, the Butler Choctaw Alliance, August 11, 1896, and the Carrollton Alabama Alliance News, September 15, 1896. Goodwyn may have chosen not to file a contest because of the expense involved; like Manning and Reese, he had spent as much as he dared in the lobbying campaigns of 1894-1896. He was probably discouraged, in addition, by the obvious enthusiasm of North Alabama voters for the Silver Democracy of Joseph Johnston and William Jennings Bryan. See Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 314-317.

69. Manning, Fadeout, 41.

70. Butler Choctaw Alliance, August 11, 1896. It should be noted that there was never any mention of Alabama Republicans supporting the Populist presidential ticket in 1896.

71. W.E. Chandler to W.S. Reese, June 3, 1896, in the Chandler Papers. A few months after the fall elections, J.W. Dubose predicted the dissolution of the People's Party, and stated that "the alternative is the Republican Party." See J.W. Dubose to Chappell Cory, March 29, 1897, in the Chappell Cory Papers, ADAH, quoted in Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 326.

72. Manning, Five to Twenty-Five, 72.


74. Alexander City Outlook, August 28, 1896, and the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, September 3, 1896. Manning visited Tallapoosa County in late August, and talked with his future friend and opponent Fitz O. Hooten of the Outlook. Hooten believed that Manning was going to "bolt" to McKinley.

75. Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 318-319, and S.W. John to Robert McKee, November 6, 1896, in the McKee Papers. Some Populist committeemen were adamantly opposed to a joint electoral ticket; see A.T. Goodwyn's comments in the Eufaula Times and News, August 13, 1896.
76. Butler Choctaw Alliance, August 19, 1896. When it became obvious that the Democracy would have nothing to do with a joint electoral ticket, Kolb and Bowman announced their support of Bryan and Sewall. For this, in mid-October, they were officially read out of the People's Party. Philander Morgan, who likewise supported the Bryan-Sewall combination, was not read out of the agrarian movement. Yet, Morgan took over the ownership of the Birmingham People's Weekly Tribune in November, and published it as a Bryan Democratic sheet. See the Alexander City Outlook, October 16, 1896, the Ashland People's Party Advocate, November 6, 1896, the Butler Choctaw Alliance, October 27, November 24, 1896, and R.F. Kolb to Marion Butler, October 20, 1896, in the Butler Papers. See also Philander Morgan to Joseph F. Johnston, January 27, 1897, in Box 36, Official Governors' Papers.


78. J.C. Manning to W.E. Chandler September 28, 1900, in the Chandler Papers.


80. Rogers, One-Gallused Rebellion, 328-329; the Palmer-Buckner ticket received 6462 votes.

CHAPTER IX
REPUBLICAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS CRUSADER, 1897-1909

After the collapse of Populism in 1896, Joseph Manning fought for civil rights from within the Republican Party. His political fortunes varied greatly, as did his health, but his principles developed along consistent lines. As befitted a founder of the People's Party, Manning believed that the small farmers and workers of the South, white and black, formed a single class, and he knew that this producing class was divided and defrauded by Democratic appeals to race hatred. He hoped, above all, that the great mass of common people could someday be liberated from the control of the hitherto invincible oligarchy of planters, merchants, editors, and politicians. Yet he recognized that political conditions were changing in Alabama and the South. Indeed, as the Mississippi Plan of constitutional disfranchisement triumphed in state after state, Manning became more an advocate for the dispossessed and less a politician.\(^1\) Since his constituency was denied the right to vote, he spent much of his time writing accurate, if polemical accounts of civic, social, and economic repression in his native region. Much of this work was directed, as in 1895-1896, toward enlightened middle-class sentiment in the Northeast. There, Manning expanded his circle of acquaintances to include many of the early backers of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored
People. At length, as his beloved Hill Country yeomen strayed helplessly into the arms of such racist demagogues as Thomas Heflin, Joseph depended increasingly upon the friendship and resources of black men and women in Alabama and the cities of the North. Thus, though he protested sometimes that he spoke primarily as a representative of the white majority of the South, Manning's faith in "the gospel of human brotherhood" shone through the rest of his life.  

Following the presidential election of 1896, Manning sought a patronage job from the incoming McKinley administration. Never one to underestimate his own worth, the brash young convert to Republicanism aimed for the Third Assistant Postmaster Generalship, a position from which he could have mended his personal finances and advised the President on Southern affairs. Manning should have known that his candidacy would be interpreted as a challenge to Mark Hanna's protégé, William Vaughn. But he reasoned, correctly enough, that he had served the GOP well when the contest cases of the previous year were before the Fifty-fourth Congress; and he reckoned that, as one of the most influential stump speakers in Alabama, he would be treated as a valuable asset to the party.  

Filled with unrealistic expectations, Manning assembled an imposing-sounding list of supporters. Congressmen W.F. Aldrich and M.W. Howard of Alabama and Senator Jeter Pritchard of North Carolina endorsed him for the Assistant Postmaster Generalship, as did a number of Republican state executive committee men from Georgia, Louisiana, and Tennessee. In
addition, Populist, Republican, and Democratic editors throughout
Alabama signed petitions and sent letters attesting to his fitness
to serve the new administration.⁴ The bubble burst, however, when
Joseph traveled to Washington, D.C., in February 1897, expecting
to be offered the desired post immediately after McKinley's inaugura-
tion. Once in the capital, he learned that the influence of William
Vaughn and his lieutenant William Youngblood counted for more than any
number of endorsements. Moreover, Senators Morgan and Pettus of
Alabama had threatened to block confirmation of any appointment offered
Manning. Feeling crushed and betrayed, he concealed the fact that he
was "mad all over," and issued a statement withdrawing his name from
contention, so as "to prevent my candidacy from being associated with
any differences that may exist among Alabama Republicans,... and to
avoid being considered... as a scrambler for office." Deflated and
impovertiished, Manning gave up hope of a quick acceptance in national
Republican circles. There was nothing for him to do but turn,
as he had done before, to the South and West, to make a living as
best he could.⁵

In the spring of 1897, Manning and his family moved to Bartlett,
Texas. There they lived with Zoe Duncan Manning's parents while Joseph
attempted to establish a Republican newspaper. But funds for even a
weekly journal were not to be found, and after seven difficult months
the Mannings returned "to sniff nature's ozone in the hills" of Tallas-
poosa County, Alabama, where some of Zoe's uncles and cousins lent them
a tenant farm.⁶ Manning's life "resting under the shade of his own fig
tree," as editor Fitz O. Hooten of the nearby Alexander City Outlook put it, was neither idyllic nor safe. For more than a year he participated in the arduous round of the cotton farmer's activities—plowing, planting, "putting by," harvesting. Furthermore, he was several times threatened by toughs who were attempting to set up a "branch farming" (moonshining) operation on his land. Manning's bravery in resisting intimidation, and on one occasion in meeting force with force, made him something of a hero among even Democratic editors. Meanwhile, the "ex-Evangel and ex-reformer," as one journalist called him, began to resume political activity.

By the summer of 1898 Manning had affiliated with the black wing of the Tallapoosa County GOP, which was led by white Federal Revenue Agent Jake Perryman, black medical student Will Brummett, and various black schoolteachers and businessmen. Negroes were an assertive majority among local Republicans, and Manning chose to work with the "black and tans" because they were concerned, primarily, with the preservation of universal manhood suffrage. The Lily White Republican minority, on the other hand, maintained an alliance with the People's Party, an organization dominated increasingly by white supremacist J. Percy Oliver. In the county elections of 1898, Manning and the Perryman faction supported the incumbent Probate Judge R.A.J. Cumbee, an independent-minded Democrat and ballot rights advocate who was out of favor with both the Populist-Lily White coalition and the Silver Democratic machine. Manning spoke before a number of audiences, but his most important address was delivered before a black rally held at Dadeville, the county seat, in
early July. Urging his listeners to vote for Judge Cumbee, Manning likewise advised them to be true to themselves. He told the gathering, according to the hostile Dadeville Herald, that any man who cherished party loyalty above freedom of conscience "was a slave," placing a great emphasis on the word "slave." Yet he vowed to stand with the GOP on most issues "because the principles of the Republican Party came nearer coinciding with his principles" than did those of any other party. In addition to campaigning for Cumbee (who lost the election), Manning clearly was advertising himself, what he stood for and the extent of his party regularity, to the Republicans of Alabama. In Tallapoosa County, at least, he was accorded a respectful hearing. By autumn he was seeking for a means to spread his influence further still.11

In December 1898, William McKinley visited Alabama with a suite which included Postmaster General Charles Emory Smith. During his one day in the state, McKinley was surrounded by an "honor guard" of state legislators, and it is doubtful that Manning was able to talk to the President. But Manning did manage to obtain an interview with Smith, who in 1896 had arranged for him to speak before the Union League in Philadelphia. In all probability he warned Smith that several of the administration's trusted patronage-brokers, notably William Youngblood, were engaged in selling post office jobs to the highest bidder. Impressed with Manning's knowledge of state and regional politics, the Postmaster counseled him to apply for his own post office in central Alabama.12 Within a week of their conversation, in addition, the Dadeville Herald reported that Manning had accepted a newspaper position. Whether through the influence of Smith or through his own considerable energy, he had secured
the Alabama agency for the "independent Republican" New Orleans Daily Item. During the two years that he worked for the prestigious Item, Manning was "in his natural sphere." Even staunch Democrats like Fitz Hooten of the Alexander City Outlook looked forward to reading the Republican journal, confident that Joseph, "blessed with the happy faculty of satirizing or veneering at will," would "cut a wide swath among the state politicians." Manning, though, saw his mission in a more serious light. He was determined, by all expedient means, to dethrone Hanna's men within the Alabama GOP and to fight the progress of the "Mississippi Plan."13

Manning knew that boss rule as traditionally practiced among Southern Republicans was bound to lead to a certain amount of corruption. As he told W.E. Chandler: "It is always the same cry for boodle and the same old scramble, and the letting out of offices by the [boss] for boodle . . . The upbuilding of the party in the South has been SUBORDINATED to this sort of dirty politics."14 The case of William Youngblood, however, was a matter of discussion among many concerned Alabama Republicans. Even more than State Chairman Vaughn, Youngblood enjoyed Mark Hanna's confidence. From his post as "Auditor of the Treasury for the Interior Department," he had more than once submitted patronage recommendations which did not "begin to suit a large number of Republicans . . . who have been true to their colors through thick and thin." Yet Youngblood's candidates were nearly always appointed, a circumstance which earned him a reputation as "the shrewdest politician in Alabama." At the same time, he appeared to be entering into a life of unaccustomed prosperity. A few months before Manning became an Item reporter, a pamphlet entitled
"On Official Corruption in Alabama" circulated in the state and in Washington, D.C. Signed by an obscure Republican named W.L. Taylor, the work charged Youngblood with accepting bribes and evidently gave specific details of illegal transactions. Nothing was done at the time, but at intervals in 1899 and 1900, Manning used his connections to air the charges against Youngblood and to expose a political mentality which seemed to invite corruption among officeholders. "It is a notorious fact," he asserted, that Mark Hanna, having "'fixed' every Republican national committeeman from the South with a fat job, ... proposes to seat every Hanna delegation from this section in the next national convention by pulling the strings on [these] salaried committeemen." Naturally the Democratic press publicized such remarks, and likewise, editors happily reprinted the "fancy repartee" which was a by-product of the Manning-Youngblood feud. After the Auditor had called him a "character assassin," for example, Joseph replied:

"I never saw so little character to so much carcass in my life." Despite the dangers of speaking his mind so vociferously, Manning was to a degree acting astutely. By early 1900 Youngblood was an embarrassment to his masters, and upon the demand of influential Alabama Republicans—probably including Congressman W.F. Aldrich and ex-Postmaster A.A. Mabson of Montgomery—he was removed from the national committee. A year later he resigned his auditorship, thus ending a stormy episode in which the influence of the Vaughn machine was reduced. Manning, for his part, had firmly established himself as a fearless journalist, and as a man who had best be listened to. Most important of all he had struck a blow for freedom of conscience within the Southern
In July 1900 the postmastership fell vacant at Alexander City, a thriving Tallapoosa County railroad town of a thousand souls. Manning immediately applied for the job, believing that Postmaster General Smith would favor his candidacy. But as the result of a specific request from Senator John T. Morgan, no appointment was made. Instead, the position was given on an interim basis to Dr. J.A. Goggins, a Morgan ally willing, reportedly, to claim membership in either party as occasion demanded. As far as Morgan was concerned, Goggins' "pro tempore" tenure could last indefinitely. Manning, who was "making" Republican politics very warm with local pro-McKinley speeches, was astounded at the news from Washington. He had the support, he assured Senator Chandler, of W.F. Aldrich and all of Alabama's Republican national committeemen (including William Vaughn). It was plain, at least to Manning, that Morgan alone was determined to block his appointment, in revenge "for what I did in 1894-95-96." "From that day to this," he lamented, "I have been tracked and hounded down at every turn, ... for the crusade I made then against [Democratic] election methods." It is difficult to say whether Morgan was acting entirely on his own initiative, or with the blessing of Republicans anxious to punish the outspoken journalist. Chandler and Aldrich, in any event, took Manning's part and pressed Charles Emory Smith not to abandon such a talented politician. Smith relented, however, only after Manning had secured endorsements from an overwhelming majority of Alexander City Republicans, the Democratic mayor and leading businessmen of the town, and Fifth District Democratic Congressman Sidney J. Bowie. Even so, the appointment was not sent in
until mid-December; J.T. Morgan, after a last-minute show of obstinacy, let it go through before the Christmas recess. At last Manning could be assured of his status for a few years. In addition, he was now master of an income ($1300 per annum) large enough to finance future travels and writings. It was perhaps fortunate that he attained relative economic security when he did. Already, he had committed his resources and much of his energy to the fight against disfranchisement.

While Manning was finding his niche as a Republican journalist, reformer, and postmaster, suffrage restriction sentiment was making headway within the Democracy. In the legislature of 1896-1897 a constitutional convention bill, backed by Governor Joseph Johnston, had been defeated by an unstable Senate coalition of Populists, Republicans, and hesitant Democrats. Throughout his successful reelection campaign of the next year, Johnston favored a new constitution. But during the 1898-1899 legislative session the Governor and his urban Progressive allies were alarmed to see, as one writer has observed, "that they were no longer in control of the movement." In December 1898, when a determined majority maneuvered a Constitutional Convention Act through the legislature, it was apparent that the pro-convention forces were composed of Black Belt Bourbons and "gold Democrats, linked to the interests of railroads and industrial corporations." The measure produced by this union of planter and big business spokesmen specifically bound the prospective convention to maintain the current system of legislative apportionment (thus preserving Black Belt control of lawmaking) and protect the corporations from excessive taxation. The
Convention Act, in other words, would have circumvented much that Johnston, the middle-class reformers, and the North Alabama Democracy had hoped to accomplish. Johnston signed the bill, but speedily decided to secure its repeal. By April 1899, he had called a special session of the legislature for that purpose, and was busily lining up Democratic, Populist, and Republican support.

In the spring of 1899, declaring his respect for a man who would "sacrifice" political considerations "to protect the dear people," Manning came out in favor of the Governor's repeal movement. Through the columns of the Daily Item he was able to make his voice heard. In May after the special session had convened, for instance, Manning published a story charging that "$25,000 of New York capital" had been secured by the proponents of disfranchisement "to be used in buying up constitutional convention delegates." Since the inspiration for this sensational article was widely supposed to have come from Johnston, the Alexander City Outlook commented that "when two Joes get their heads together any old fake is imminent, by Joe!" For the moment a crisis was averted; primed with patronage, the special session rescinded the Convention Act.

Yet Johnston, by throwing in his lot with the Populists and anti-convention Democrats and Republicans, had left himself vulnerable to the race-baiting arguments which ironically, had served him well from 1896 to 1898. The subsequent erosion of Johnston's Democratic support was evident in 1900, when he ran for the U.S. Senate against incumbent John T. Morgan, a strong advocate of the Mississippi Plan. Manning and other pro-Johnston journalists diligently interviewed such administration spokesmen as State Senator P.O. Stevens of Tallapoosa County, who was confident that Morgan
would be repudiated by the voters of North Alabama. The rank-and-file of the "party of the fathers," however, thought otherwise. Perceived as the candidate of racial solidarity, Morgan swept the county primaries and conventions of 1900 and was later nominated by his party's legislative caucus without a single dissenting vote. In the August gubernatorial election, Morgan's friend William J. Samford was elected after winning over three Johnston supporters in the Democratic convention. As a historian of disfranchisement notes: "The one certainty coming out of the election was that there would be a constitutional convention." In December another Convention Act passed handily, though with a provision requiring a referendum on April 23, 1901; at that time Alabamians could vote for or against the convention and elect delegates. Discouraged and disorganized, the anti-convention leaders were unable to match the campaign mounted by the Democratic state executive committee, whose propagandists maintained, wrote Manning, "that it was all a . . . gesture of Southern gentlemen to get rid of the ignorant Negro in politics and to maintain white supremacy." On April 23, "participation was at an all-time low," and the convention carried by a vote of 70,305 to 45,505. Of the one hundred and fifty-five delegates chosen, only fourteen were Republicans or Populists. The black editor of the Huntsville Journal spoke the truth when he cried out: "It is good by [sic] with the poor white folks and niggers now, for the train of disfranchisement is on the rail."

The men who wrote a constitution during the summer of 1901 proposed to disfranchise Alabama's biracial lower class through a literacy test,
poll tax, and grandfather clause. These devices, as the editor of the Camp Hill Times matter of factly reported, were designed "to perpetuate the power of the Democratic Party." Unlike the instruments adopted in most Southern states, the Alabama constitution had to be approved by the electorate. Yet despite the obviously partisan motives of the suffrage restrictionists, no effective opposition movement materialized before a schedule November 11 referendum. Joseph Manning and a few postmasters made local anti-constitution speeches, as did such Populist journalists as J.E. Pond of the Rockford People's Courier. But by the autumn of 1901 the membership of the People's Party was negligible, and many white Republicans, according to the Cullman Alabama Republican, were "favorable to eliminating the negro from politics." Even the Democratic foes of disfranchisement were in disarray. Joseph Johnston and a band of "humanistic Progressives" waited until October before organizing the "State Campaign Committee opposed to the ratification of the Constitution," and then went about their business in a half-hearted manner. All in all, confusion and defeatism reigned supreme among the would-be saviors of mass democracy.

Leaderless as they were, however, the common folk of twenty-nine counties in North, central, and "Wiregrass"Alabama voted against ratification. In areas where a vigorous fight was made, the results were sometimes dramatic; in Tallapoosa County, where Joseph Manning joined forces with a number of prominent Johnston Democrats, the constitution was defeated by 1427 votes. Over the state at large, though, the new document was carried by a vote of 108,613 to 81,734—and interesting-
ly, the largest pro-constitution majorities were returned from Dallas, Perry, Hale, Wilcox, and other machine-dominated Black Belt counties. Indeed, thousands of "Negroes were recorded as having voted to disfranchise themselves," Manning stated a year later, and conscious of the monstrous irony inherent in the statement, continued emotionally: "Not in all the history of the conduct of Christian governments . . . can there be found a parallel to the depravity to which this Alabama autocracy . . . has come." 33

The adoption of the new constitution was a brilliant strategic achievement for the Alabama Democracy. And yet, reflecting on the transition from the old order to the new, Joseph Manning decided that the basic impetus for the disfranchisement movement was fear--of defeat, of exposure, of federal intervention. The Cooperationists' Congressional Strategy had failed, he knew, but he believed that it had come too close to success for the Democrats' comfort. The publicity which accompanied the congressional contests of 1894-1896 "so clearly acquainted the entire nation with the election methods of the Democratic . . . machine that the oligarchy was compelled to change its system from that of the black belt control to the present form of manipulation." At another time Manning pictured "the ousted Democratic congressmen" of the late 1890's, "returning home with the declaration that something had to be done." "It was in this while," he recalled, "that the leaders of the Southern Democratic Party turned . . . to dominate the situation by the simple process of disfranchisement of the greater portion of opposition voters." 34 Manning may have exaggerated the role of the Cooperationists in forcing the Democrats to consider suffrage limitation as a
substitute for ballot fraud. The precedent of the Mississippi Plan had been discussed ever since Mississippi adopted a disfranchising instrument in 1890. Likewise, Alabama's Sayre Law of 1893 was patently designed to reduce the number of black and white voters. Nevertheless, Manning correctly assessed the Constitution of 1901 as essentially a weapon of political and social control. Moreover, he was determined to observe and combat, locally and from within the state and national GOP, the effects of Democratic hegemony.

"The same God that created the white man created the black man," Manning subsequently wrote, adding: "And God intended, I believe, that every man should have equal opportunity under the law." During his year in Alexander City Manning acted upon these convictions and became, in the performance of his civic and professional duties, an advocate and spokesman for the town's black population. In 1902, for example, he learned that local officials had placed only one Alexander City Negro on the voting lists, though hundreds of black men were of voting age. The principal of the "Colored School" was "repeatedly told that the registrars were not registering that day," said Manning, who observed that other "Negroes of property and good standing were humiliated by the same treatment." Incensed, he gathered together some of the black citizens who were legally qualified to vote and, according to a testimonial later drawn up at a meeting of "registered colored voters," led the little band "to the registration officers and made personal plea for fair treatment for them." Finally about twenty Negroes were entered
on the city rolls. The number of black voters was indeed pitiful, yet even so, "almost all of them ow[e]d their suffrage" to the ex-
Populist postmaster. 37

In addition to his stand for voting rights, Manning had by 1902-1903 carried out a civil rights reformation in his post office. At the time he became postmaster, race relations were deteriorating as the Southern governments sought to institutionalize disfranchisement through ostentatious white supremacy programs. In Alabama and over the region, legislatures passed a diversity of Jim Crow legislation which drew the lines of racial etiquette and communication ever more rigidly. Upon the slightest pretext, many Southern newspapers published lurid articles condemning the alleged lusts and criminal propensities of Negroes. 38 The degradation and tensions which accompanied rule by the "dominant race" were evident to Manning in the behavior of his black customers, who "would huddle in a corner until all whites were waited upon." Eager to mitigate the racial caste system wherever he could, he "went into the office lobby . . . for two or three days, telling those who came in for mail to get in line as they came in--first come, first served, old or young, black or white." The white citizenry acquiesced fairly cheerfully in the change of procedure--until Manning instructed his employees, including a young white lady, to address black patrons by their proper titles instead of their first names. "The populace was astounded," he recalled. "Then, around town, [people said:] 'Joe Manning wants the clerks to Mr. and Mrs. the Negroes!'" He persevered, however, and carried the
day when the mother of the female clerk came over to his side. There-
after "the 'Dick' and 'John' stuff stopped, and there was no shunting
colored people to one side [or] preference... given to [the] 'best
white people.' '39

At the same time Manning was challenging the racial mores of
Alexander City, he was working to gain the goodwill of all the people.
He redecorated the post office, added new combination boxes and service
windows, and in general conducted business with such cheery efficiency
that a previously dubious businessman wrote: "He has been kind,
accommodating,... and has given us by far the best service we have
ever had."40 Furthermore, Manning was conspicuously active in civic
groups. In May of 1901 he joined with Mayor S.J. Nolen, editor Fitz
Hooten, and banker Benjamin Russell to found the "Industrial and
Development Association of Alexander City," an embryo Chamber of
Commerce. The same year, under the auspices of the Association, he
assumed the burden of planning a fall "Street Fair and Farmer's Jubilee."
The resulting festival, which featured bazaars, contests, musical
performances, and a hot air balloon, cleared more than a thousand dollars
and, as Joseph modestly claimed, "gave that section of the state the best
show it ever saw." Every day while the fair was in progress Manning
went out to inspect the big balloon, but just as often, to the delight
of the crowd, he melodramatically refused to take a ride. Certainly,
in dealing with the merchants and solid citizens of a Southern town, he
had lost none of his flair for pleasing "my old Populist country farmer"
friends.41

Then on Friday, June 13, 1902, Manning proved that his civic
patriotism was more than ordinary boosterism. On that day a wind-spread fire literally destroyed Alexander City. More than thirty businesses, every public building, two churches, and twelve private houses were lost to the flames. Yet Manning, aided by a troop of black laborers, pulled the records and equipment from the burning post office, and installed them in the basement of a nearby unscathed church. Next he found an operating telegraph wire, reported to federal officials in Birmingham, and arranged for donations of food, medicine, and clothing from the Birmingham and Montgomery Chambers of Commerce. The relief arrived by rail in less than twenty-four hours, and the intrepid postmaster was the hero of the hour. Years later, in fact, he was convinced that his public-spirited activities, and particularly his accomplishments during the troubles of June 1902, were some of the "few things that held to me enough people to enable my living in Alexander City, in the face of my own views."42

Manning was pre-eminently a political man, but he was also a humanitarian. Though he once claimed that he had interested himself in local affairs only "to overcome the 'yak-yak'" caused by his new post office regulations, it is probable that he would have undertaken some form of service or promotional work under any circumstances. What separated Manning from several of his colleagues in the Industrial and Development Association (and in general, from contemporary exponents of "progress") was his willingness to see the benefits of economic growth distributed to all the folk of the town and surrounding countryside. On one occasion he encouraged two black men, one a veteran of the Spanish-American War and the other "a substantial near-town farmer," in
their aim of founding a general merchandise store. It was speedily apparent that the white storekeepers of Alexander City were unhappy at the prospect of losing some of their black customers. Nonetheless, having secured a downtown location from a sympathetic property-owner, the two enterprising Negroes opened their business, and Manning made a point of giving the new concern his trade from time to time. For his pains, for standing up for the principle of equality of opportunity, he was informed by a number of the "best people" that he had betrayed the white race. His actions, he knew, were simple and well-intentioned. Still, since he had crossed over the line of racial solidarity, his transgression was "big enough to make talk." Gradually he came to accept the fact that, while many leading citizens found him personally likeable, his efforts to be even-handed with members of both races were bound to "rub the fur the wrong way" among white townpeople. Even among those who hated him Manning's bravery commanded respect, but he could seldom relax completely. And in the meantime, beyond the limited sphere of Alexander City's social and political relations, he continued a broad-gauged fight for the restoration of full constitutional rights to black and "poor white" Southerners.43

Manning was a firm supporter of Theodore Roosevelt's first administration. He had known Roosevelt as early as 1895, and he was convinced that the forthright, reform-minded New Yorker could convert the Southern GOP into a "high-purposed organization." He believed that in order to accomplish this end the new President must "tak[e] up new
leaders, . . . broad[en] and strength[en]" party membership, and cast out "the old boodle element of Republicans" loyal to Mark Hanna. Manning was unpleasantly surprised and somewhat confused, therefore, when Roosevelt announced late in 1901 the appointment of Thomas G. Jones as Judge of Alabama's Middle District. Jones, Manning complained to W.E. Chandler, was a "Democrat . . . of the ballot box stuffing and bourbon type, . . . who would never be with us." However, it was common knowledge that the President had chosen Jones on the recommendation of Tuskegee educator and political boss Booker T. Washington; consequently Manning tried to maintain good relations with the latter. When Roosevelt and Washington dined together at the White House, dozens of Southern Democratic editors and politicians raised a furor of racist protest. Manning, for his part, praised "the recognition by the President of the . . . greatest leader of the colored race." And indeed it chanced that within a year, events in Alabama gave the anxious postmaster reason to hope that under the guidance of Washington and other Roosevelt lieutenants, the Republican Party might change for the better in the South.

In the spring of 1902 Manning and Montgomery Republican lawyer Charles H. Scott collaborated in the formation of a statewide Roosevelt Club. Open to all, the local branches of the club attracted most of Alabama's two thousand or more black voters and many would-be voters. Chairman William Vaughn and a majority of the Republican executive committee, who as federal officeholders appointed under Hanna were fearful of Roosevelt, responded by excluding black delegates from the party's September convention in Birmingham. On the proper day
Manning arrived with a racially balanced contingent from Tallapoosa County; but when it was certain that Vaughn planned to "go on with the dance" on a Lily White basis, Manning, Scott and a handful of white delegates boycotted the meetings. In addition, Manning and Scott sent telegrams warning the President's chief patronage adviser, General James S. Clarkson of New York, of the anti-administration nature of the Alabama convention. Booker T. Washington denounced the Lily White machine in meetings with Clarkson, and in a few months Vaughn was dismissed from his post as U.S. District Attorney. Manning was satisfied that he had played an important part in taking the "official scalps" of the old Hanna faction. Soon, he began wondering how he could persuade the administration to pursue a vigorous policy against an even more formidable enemy—the Democratic oligarchy. 47

Over the years Manning had not forgotten his Northern reform acquaintances; rather, he had expanded his contacts to include T. Thomas Fortune, black editor of the New York Age, and John E. Milholland, philanthropist and founder of the Constitution League, a biracial civil rights group. 48 As was his wont, Manning thought that the leaders of the Republican Party would move more quickly against the Democratic regimes if "the nation [were] aroused to an understanding of" the "disfranchise-ment system," and "to a realization of the results arising from its application." Upon the advice of such allies as Milholland and General Clarkson, then, he sought and received an invitation to address Boston's Middlesex Club on Grant Night, April 27, 1903. An arch-Republican institution, the Middlesex Club made a practice of entertaining promising and controversial orators from the provinces. No
exception to the rule, Manning delivered a speech entitled: "Letting the South Alone: Class Government that Defrauds Whites and Blacks." In a sense, Manning had been preparing his assault on the disfranchisers for two years. The urge to tell the truth about conditions in the South had become for him "a matter of conviction, a duty"; yet he did not forget where he was. He began his talk by lauding the founders of the Republican Party, the authors of the War Amendments, and all of the "patriotic and philanthropic" men who had refused to "let the South alone" from 1860 to 1876. He was confident, he added, that the spirit imparted to the GOP by Lincoln and "the great Blaine" still existed, and that President Roosevelt would go down in history as "another Grant." With these bows to the patron saints of the occasion, he warned his audience that the Party of the Union, which was now a national majority party, must cultivate an "invincible" will "to uphold the Federal Constitution and to sustain and perpetuate the republican form of government." Firm action was necessary, he urged, because the heirs of the Confederacy—still deadly foes of constitutional liberty—were in complete control in Alabama and in other Southern states as well:

The same families which coerced Alabama into secession and were foremost in promoting degrading legislation after the war are now the boasted leaders of the most brazen and reprehensible system of restricted government that could be conceived by the astute minds of any perverters of human rights.

Turning to specific examples of the "disfranchisement system" in operation, Manning demonstrated his growing knowledge of and concern for the plight of black citizens under the rule of "the favored few." There
were in Alabama, he revealed, over 70,000 literate blacks, about 14,000 black farmowners, "940 male colored teachers, . . . [and] colored merchants, bankers, artisans, physicians, lawyers, editors, ministers, numbering at least 5,000." All of these men were "of a character to be registered" under the strict tests of the 1901 constitution. In actuality, fewer than ten per cent of the state's eligible Negroes were allowed to vote. To Manning, the systematic political repression of a productive and articulate group was an "indescribable spectacle." Nearly as disgusting, though, was the manner in which politicians such as Thomas Haflin, a race-baiting delegate to Alabama's recent constitutional convention, sought to divide the races by charging that blacks desired "social equality." In truth, said Manning, "social equality" was "a subject neither seriously thought of in the South by the most cowardly white [nor] wished for by the most stupid black." Thoroughgoing social freedom and equality "does not exist even among white people," as white agrarians had long known. Begging his listeners not to be "diverted" by the trumped-up issue of racial control, Manning presented statistics tending to show that a majority of white voters had opposed the Alabama constitution, and charged that the "legal rights and political privileges" of white tenant farmers "are no more sacred to the Bourbon oligarchy than are these rights and privileges of the Negro." Since Alabama was helplessly in the grip of "a class government of the most pronounced type," Manning proclaimed that it was the duty of the Congress and the President to restore a popularly based government. Furthermore, he pointed out that the Fourteenth Amendment con-
camed a simple means of at least punishing the Democratic usurpers. Specifically, section two of the amendment provides that states which prohibit eligible citizens from voting are liable to a loss of congressional representation. In point of fact, Representatives Edgar D. Crumpacker of Indiana and Charles Dick of Ohio had in 1901-1902 invoked the Fourteenth Amendment in resolutions proposing to reduce the size of Southern delegations. The resolutions failed, to the relief of many civil rights advocates including Booker T. Washington, who was apprehensive that enforcement of the letter of the Constitution might be viewed as an admission of a state's "right," upon suffering the prescribed penalty, to limit suffrage. Manning, however, obviously thought of the congressional reduction clause as a weapon with which to force the oligarchies to discard de jure disfranchisement, or else lose a sizeable part of their collective national influence and protection against further federal interference.53

In the finale of his Middlesex Club address, Joseph shrewdly appealed to the patriotism of the members. On Grant Night five years earlier, the club had given a thundering ovation when Midwestern orator Albert J. Beveridge had linked the name of Grant with the imperialist ideal of Americanizing foreign peoples. Now, Manning commented that "it would be truly as worthy an act to have the Republican Party rescue the South from Bourbon oppression as to have it free Cuba from Spanish wrongs."54 The gathering heartily applauded the Alabama postmaster upon the conclusion of "Letting the South Alone," though it is likely that they were moved more by his Republican hagiology than by his stern challenge to continued activism and concern. Still, Manning was
gratified and arranged for his speech to be printed in pamphlet form. After a brief vacation near Walden, Massachusetts, he returned home. For in Alabama, as he must have known, revelations of racial and class persecution would shortly bear out the most startling accusations against the rule of the "slaveholding" Bourbons. 55

In March, April, and May of 1903, a steady stream of peonage complaints were brought to the attention of Middle District Judge Thomas G. Jones and U.S. Attorney Warren S. Reese, Jr. A white lawyer named Erastus J. Parsons, among other individuals, had reported that numerous men and women were being held in involuntary servitude in Shelby, Coosa, and Tallapoosa Counties. Jones and Reese, both of whom possessed a sense of paternalistic responsibility toward the state's poor and black citizens, determined to investigate Parsons' charges thoroughly. 56 To discover the truth, the two officials contacted friendly local observers before sending in federal marshals, and it is therefore entirely possible that Joseph Manning assisted in the collection of information. Certainly he recalled, late in life, that his "exposure of peonage" had facilitated the prosecutions made by his old compatriot Reese. 57 The story uncovered by government agents, at any rate, implicated law officers and important landowners in a multi-county slavery ring. Three wealthy farmers of Tallapoosa County, John W. Pace, George D. Cosby, and Barancas Cosby, were the masterminds of a system through which hard-working black laborers were selected, often by paid-off constables, arrested on convenient charges, and brought before certain
Justices of the Peace. The latter inevitably convicted each unlucky defendant, whereupon Pace or one of the Cosbys would appear and offer to pay all fines and expenses provided the prospective slave, in turn, signed a contract agreeing to work off the amount. Faced with the alternative of working on a county chain gang, few prisoners refused the landlord’s offer. Next, assured that they were still convicts, the confused peons were transported to the confined world of their master’s farm, where they were completely in his power. Since the obliging, well-bribed Justices of the Peace generally expunged (or never entered) the record of court proceedings undertaken against the Pace-Cosby victims, the peons became in a sense non-people in the eyes of the law; the masters were free to whip their laborers to death without worrying about inquiries from local authorities. Living conditions in "the peonage hills of Tallapoosa County," as Manning referred to the work camps near Alexander City, were the same as those of a chain gang stockade. Indeed, Pace had been for twenty years the authorized contractor for the Tallapoosa County convict lease, and for the better part of that time had serenely ignored grand jury complaints regarding his cruelty to prisoners.58

As soon as Reese had assembled sufficient information, he called together a federal grand jury and began to seek indictments. The offenses committed by the professional enslavers were so repulsive and the evidence so damning that even the intransigently pro-planter Montgomery Advertiser supported the government’s case. By mid-July eighteen landowners, justices, and constables had been charged with multiple counts of peonage, contract fraud, and assault. In order to
minimize publicity, most of the accused speedily confessed and
accepted relatively light fines or jail sentences, though arch-villain
Pace received eleven concurrent five-year terms. Trial judge
Thomas Jones, a conscientious upper class spokesman, conducted the
hearings with the intention of exposing the evils of peonage, and
deterring the crime in the future. But after only two months of trials
Jones confidently advised Booker T. Washington that "the system was
broken up," mirroring in this opinion the feelings of many defenders
of the status quo who hoped that Alabama justice had proved its
integrity throughout an embarrassing ordeal. Just as the Advertiser
was crowing over "the passing of peonage," however, investigations in the
Southern District revealed that thousands of Negroes in the Black Belt
and one or more white men in the southeastern Alabama "Wiregrass" were
being held in involuntary servitude. This time most of the offenders
were powerful, well-connected Black Belt planters and politicians,
and it was clear that neither public opinion nor Southern District
judicial officials were prepared to challenge the labor practices
of the "best people." Thus, the will to prosecute faded with the peonage
system very much intact.

Manning followed the trials carefully and drew his own conclusions.
During the spring of 1903 he had encouraged representatives of the
Northeastern reform press to cover the proceedings in Jones' court.
Ultimately, New York Evening Post editor Oswald Garrison Villard, upon
receipt of a similar invitation from Booker T. Washington, sent correspon-
dents who covered the Pace-Cosby scandal in sensational detail. Manning
was certain that such "national dissension" from Southern practices was
responsible for the quick capitulation and sentencing of the Tallapoosa County defendants, for Jones and the defense lawyers were anxious to be rid of the Northern reporters. Yet the best efforts of the judiciary and the press, Manning saw, could not guarantee that a spirit of justice would prevail in the courtroom. In one of the few cases to go before a jury, crucial testimony against sawmill owner J. Fletcher Turner had been given by poons and a lower class white constable; the counsel for the defense, however, merely asked the all-white jurors: "Are you going to brand Fletch Turner as a convict on . . . testimony from three negroes and one sorry white man?" Jones ruled that racial considerations were irrelevant, but the jury could not agree upon a verdict. Though Turner later confessed to his crimes and was fined, the moral of his first trial was obvious: white jurors were extremely reluctant to convict a white man for offenses committed against a Negro.

When a two thousand-member convention of the Alabama Sons of the Confederacy, addressed by Tom Heflin, broke out in spontaneous applause for the Turner jury, Manning must have pondered the deterioration of social responsibility among all classes of white men. Race relations, he knew, were increasingly a matter of mutual hostility. Quite often, quarrels between black and white men ended in barbarous lynching bees, or in the type of justice administered (a year later) to one Josh Grimes of Tallapoosa County, a "black brute" sentenced to twenty years at hard labor for wrenching the arm of a little white girl. Politics, too, despite the near-universal disfranchisement of Negroes, was shot through with racist demagoguery. Black suffrage had long since ceased to be a legitimate issue in Mississippi, Manning wrote, but that did
not prevent the state's governor, James K. Vardaman, from boasting:
"I am as much opposed to Booker Washington's ... voting as I am to
the voting by the cocoanut-headed, chocolate-colored, typical coon who
blacks my boots." Manning believed that the turmoil which beset
Southern institutions resulted in large part from the long-term
Democratic policy of inciting white people to fear "black rule." And
he feared that the triumph of the Democrats' historic campaign for
racial solidarity was at hand. Apparently the relentless, multifaceted
onslaught of racial propaganda had already cut off many poor whites
from a rational understanding of their own political impotence. Ever
the optimist, though, Manning hoped to limit the victory of rampant
race-hatred and to send one more cry for help to the North and the
federal government. Therefore in 1903-1904, drawing upon ideas he had
absorbed first as a college student and more fully as a People's Party
leader, he began to write the story of Southern class development be­
fore and after the Civil War. In particular, he concentrated on the
background and effects of the disfranchisement movement. Appropriately,
he published the fruits of his labor under the title, The Rise and Reign
of the Bourbon Oligarchy.

Manning unconsciously alternated between the history of Alabama
and that of the larger region as he introduced the characters of his
drama. The white yeoman of antebellum North Alabama, he proudly
maintained, were "brave and patriotic men, who dared to aspire to a true
democracy," and who generally opposed "the revolutionary and fiery move­
ment of secession." The "adroit appeals" of the secessionists sufficed
to take Alabama and ten other states out of the union, however, and in
the course of the resulting war the slaveholding leaders of the Con-
federacy were able to capture the loyalty of large numbers (but not
a secure majority) of common white citizens. The black residents of
the South, on the other hand, had been "humble, burden-bearing [and]
ignorant" as slaves. After the war they found themselves free, im-
poverished, and in possession of the vote. Thereafter, economically
and politically, the freedmen had had to strive, "amid difficulties
known only to God and to them, to raise the standard of their people."

When federal troops were withdrawn from the South in the 1870's, the
helpless and propertyless blacks fell into the hands of their former
masters, the machine politicians of the planter Democracy, who having
regained power were prepared to keep it by any means. For more than
two decades, then, these Bourbon Democrats expertly manipulated
election returns, piling up fictitious black majorities in the Black
Belt counties in order to defeat the Republican, Greenbacker, and
agrarian candidates who challenged the oligarchy. Reformers, in turn,
came to insist "that real democracy means the people shall rule,
and that a real democrat is one who" would place "a fair and honest
ballot . . . inviolate" in the hands of the people. In classic
Populist style, Manning had attempted to show how the vulnerability of
one group of voters had undermined the legitimacy of politics in general.
"The hardships, sufferings and wrongs heaped upon the blacks . . . under
the institution of chattel slavery," he said, operated "to bring
about a condition by which the whites of the South have come to endure
a yoke of political serfdom."66
According to Manning, the Black Belt Bourbons encountered little serious opposition until the 1890's, when Populist parties and Populist-Republican coalitions commanded, as in the case of Reuben Kolb of Alabama, "tremendous" majorities of the biracial farm vote. But Manning was more than ever convinced that the agrarian revolt alone had not forced the Southern Democracies to adopt disfranchising instruments. He recalled, in fact, that "the supporters of the Kolb ticket were mocked at and defied. The Bourbon leaders . . . asserted, 'Yes, we counted you out, . . . and what are you going to do about it?" He believed wholeheartedly that Bourbon politicians in Alabama, and in Louisiana, North Carolina and other states, had been forced by the threat of the Congressional Strategy of 1894-1896 to turn from ballot fraud "to domination by the shrewdness of constitutional trickery." Everywhere, the ostensible reason for disfranchisement was the elimination of "ignorant" and "dangerous" blacks from politics. But such a rationale, he went on to explain, did not mean that the freedmen and their children had ceased to play a part in the Democratic scheme of control:

The method by which the Democratic oligarchy [now] fastens its hold upon the Democratic machine in Alabama . . . is [by] basing the representations in the conventions of the party and in the Alabama legislature upon an apportionment embracing the disfranchised blacks in the Black Belt, . . . thereby prohibiting control of the party or the legislature by the white counties.

And still the bosses of the Southern regimes, while enjoying a political advantage made possible by the presence of voteless black population, continued to insist "that the soul [sic] issue of paramount importance . . . is the . . . race issue." Assertive and grandiloquent, the planter-
class spokesmen in Congress and in the state capitols presumed "to speak for 'the South,'" and did so with such assurance that many Northerners accepted the "fact" of white majority rule (or at least, of white unity) within the region. Manning, on the other hand, was convinced that all of the Democratic arguments were consummately hypocritical, and he set out to reveal the limited extent of the "backing behind the oligarchy."68

Using election returns, and other data supplied by his friend Senator Chandler, Manning proceeded to analyze the results of several 1902 elections in three states of the lower South. South Carolina's seven-man Democratic congressional slate, he pointed out, had been elected after polling an aggregate of 29,343 out of 32,185 votes cast; yet there were 130,374 white men of voting age in the state. Turning to Mississippi, Manning noted that "favored son" John Sharp Williams had been elected to Congress without opposition, and that Mississippi's entire delegation (all Democrats) had received a total of 18,058 votes, though 150,922 white men were old enough to vote. In Alabama, where the Republican Party was relatively vigorous and where the Democrats had made "white supremacy" a campaign issue, Democratic incumbent William D. Jelks had won the gubernatorial race by a fairly heavy vote of 67,649 to 24,190; even so, taking 3,000 black voters into consideration, fewer than 100,000 of Alabama's 230,000 adult white men had voted.69 Plainly, the Democratic voters of South Carolina, Mississippi, and Alabama were a minority of the white population who could, under the U.S. Constitution, have cast ballots, and it was logical to conclude that the majority of white adults were either disfranchised outright by state poll taxes
and literacy tests, or rendered apathetic by the certainty of Democratic victory. Manning, characteristically, summed up the situation with strong words: "The great mass of [white] voters in the South have been dashed back into sullen silence and into hopeless acquiescence and, under present conditions, they are as helpless as are the blacks upon whose necks the Bourbon heel was long since pressed." And what of the claim that the "white supremacy" governments were a manifestation of pure racial solidarity?

The Bourbon Democracy of the South . . . is but a whitened sepulchre of political pretension . . . Posing as the keepers of the ark of the covenant of 'white supremacy,' these oligarchs have usurped the government of the states of the South from whites and blacks . . . Popular government is here buried in the mire of Bourbonism, and only a Vardaman could pile on more political filth.70

Manning rejected the notion that the political motives of the white South must necessarily be racist in nature, but he did not claim that white farmers were free from the taint of racism. Indeed, the disfranchisers had not kept up an "eternal and unceasing wall about the 'nigger'" in vain. For years, instead of discussing "issues really effecting [sic] the welfare of the Southern people," Democratic politicians had chosen to excite white voters and nonvoters with "an amazing tirade of abuse of the Negro." Considering the persistence of the Vardamans, Heflins, and Ben Tillmans and the absence of a strong opposition party in the South, it was no wonder that a growing number of white people were "misused and aroused beyond reason" on the subject of race relations, and therefore "inflamed to further subservience to the oligarchy." By 1904, in addition, Manning perceived what he had not
perhaps been forced to see in the 1890's: that the small number of 
whites who perpetrated lynchings and other crimes of "vengeance" 
against black men and women were, knowingly or not, furthering the 
larger interests of the Democratic Party. Joseph was willing to state 
that black men sometimes raped white women, "although seldom it may 
occurs," but he was particularly disgusted at the manner in which 
politicians, editors, and educators condoned and sometimes encouraged 
the actions of lynchers and murderers. In all, it seemed to him that 
the Democratic establishment was making a concerted effort to corrupt 
the "poor whites," oppress the blacks, and promote conflict between 
the races as often as possible:

The manner in which wrong done by an individual member 
of the colored race is taken up to arouse sentiment 
adverse to the whole race is unjust... It is cruel, 
it is shameful, ..., it is infamous to so ingeniously 
work up the sentiment of lawlessness as against the 
colored race.71

One of the effects of Southern Democratic Negrophobia, Manning 
knew, was the reinforcement of the old belief that black people, as 
a race, were especially prone to criminality. Upon examination of census 
records, however, he noted that in 1890, fewer than 25,000 of the nation's 
nine million black residents were sitting in prisons or working on chain 
gangs; on the average, too, black convicts were jailed for less serious 
crimes than those committed by their white counterparts. Obviously, 
he said, "both races supply violators of law," and yet America's Negroes 
had not made "so bad a showing for a people out of bondage, with their 
poor opportunities and environments." Nevertheless, for the benefit of 
those Southerners and Northerners who based their racial attitudes upon
negative stereotypes, Joseph presented his own view of the Negro's character. "Beginning in ignorance and want," he asserted, the freedmen have "risen to education, to property and to usefulness..."

Colored homes, colored farms, colored schools, colored churches, colored banks, colored stores, colored teachers, colored doctors, colored lawyers—this is evidence that this race has not been wholly in idleness and depravity!" It may be, of course, that Manning was accentuating the positive in emulation of Booker T. Washington, but there can be no doubt that he revealed himself as a man possessed of broad human sympathies, a willingness to take the fickleness of circumstances and conditions into account, and a steadfast democratic faith in fair play.72

In the conclusion of The Rise and Reign of the Bourbon Oligarchy, Manning argued that the Congress and federal government, by following a "let the South alone" policy, were merely "nurturing accumulating wrongs." "Only national interference," he continued, "can restore and uplift the beaten-down nationality of the Southern citizen."73 Unfortunately, he was unable to raise sufficient funds to distribute his pamphlet widely; and in any case there are indications that he would not have found a responsive audience among the leaders of Roosevelt's second administration. In private, the President railed against "these white men of the South who say that the negro is unfit to cast a vote, and who...are equally clamorous in insisting that his votes must be counted as cast when it comes to comparing their own representation with [that] of the white men of the North." But publicly from 1905 to
1908, Roosevelt courted the ruling class of the South with a series of speeches in which he emphasized the Negro's "backwardness" and claimed that law-abiding blacks had a special responsibility to root out black rapists and criminals. By the summer of 1906, Roosevelt's Secretary of War and protégé William Howard Taft had delivered a Greensboro, North Carolina, address praising the disfranchisement constitutions; the new instruments, said the Secretary, would bring peace and order to regional politics. Disappointed with the administration, Manning began to align himself with similarly inclined Northern liberals such as John Milholland of New York and A.E. Pillsbury of Massachusetts. In Alabama he disassociated himself from the strong pro-Roosevelt influence of Booker T. Washington and drew closer to R.C. Judkins, the independent-minded editor of the Montgomery Colored Alabamian. In July 1906, moreover, he founded the Alexander City Southern American, a weekly journal "of outspoken opinion with the right spirit of true Americanism." Ever more urgently, he maintained that the administration was wrong to accept the spokesmen of the "oligarchy" at face value as ingenuous defenders of white supremacy. "The Negro," he said, was "disfranchised because he was and is a Republican more than for the reason that he was and is a Negro." Manning must have known that a conflict was brewing between Roosevelt and the friends of the "Southern masses." No one, though, could have foreseen the form that struggle would take.

The Brownsville affair of late summer and autumn, 1906, was the catalyst which brought about a thorough alienation between the Roosevelt administration and a great majority of black Americans. In
mid-August, in the wake of several racial incidents, members of three Negro companies stationed near Brownsville, Texas, were accused of shooting up the town. No firm proof of the soldiers’ guilt was ever advanced, but a military investigator came to the conclusion that all of the black troops, 160 men, were involved in a “conspiracy of silence” to shield the offenders. After repeated attempts to secure confessions had failed, Roosevelt, acting upon the recommendation of his Inspector General, took the unprecedented step of dismissing the men of the three companies from the service without honor and without trial. In November Secretary of War Taft carried out the discharge order, thereby earning a share of the denunciation which black newspapers across the nation heaped on the President. Most black editors felt that the administration was in the hands, as R.C. Judkins later put it, of “Negro-haters” who had joined forces with the Southern Democracy. And, just as they repudiated Roosevelt and Taft, black leaders freely praised the few white politicians who protested Roosevelt’s violation of due process. Chief among these white critics was Republican Senator Joseph B. Foraker of Ohio, a presidential hopeful who, in the words of one authority, “made the cause of the Brownsville soldiers his own.” For more than two years Foraker probed the case to the accompaniment of both favorable and unfavorable publicity. After a number of acrimonious exchanges between the Senator and the President, a Roosevelt-approved bill was passed allowing a military court to take testimony from the troops, fourteen of whom were finally authorized for reenlistment. This partial restitution, however, was not sufficient to salvage the administration’s reputation among civil rights advocates.
Meanwhile, the Brownsville controversy had become a factor in the race for the Republican presidential nomination of 1908. Taft, Roosevelt's hand-picked successor, was opposed by anti-administration leader Joseph Foraker, who ran in part as a partisan of Standard Oil and other business giants. Yet as was only natural, Foraker's candidacy was enthusiastically supported by thousands of black voters.

But in reality the Taft-Foraker contest was never close; within the Republican Party structure of the South there was scarcely a contest at all. With characteristic decisiveness, the President had detailed former Assistant Postmaster General Frank Hitchcock to capture the Southern delegates to the GOP's Chicago convention. Hitchcock was a persuasive dispenser of patronage, and by the late spring of 1908 it was evident that Taft would carry the "rotten boroughs" without difficulty. In nearly every Southern state, to be sure, predominantly black rallies chose contesting pro-Foraker delegations; in Alabama the opposition to the "officeholders' trust" was headed by R.C. Judkins and Joseph Manning. "Excuse us who are struggling for civil liberty and an actual republican form of government," thundered Manning in the Alexander City Southern American, "for the political puerility of this man Taft." The Alabama rebels persisted until the national convention assembled in June, at which time the credentials committee, dominated by Hitchcock's allies, seated the Taft contingents. Briefly, Manning and a number of black dissidents considered naming a "Lincoln Republican ticket" and asked William E. Chandler if he would back such a movement, but Chandler, like other established white Republicans, was unwilling to bolt the party he had served so long. Thus after Taft's
nomination there was nothing for Manning to do, politically, but
decide whether to remain within the Republican Party. Practical
considerations alone dictated that he make up his mind at once—for
soon, he suspected, he would feel the weight of the administration's
displeasure. 79

Roosevelt believed that most of the Southern anti-Taft Republicans
were men "whose character and capacity are such that they have not been
regarded as fit to be appointed" to office. 80 Manning was an obvious
exception to this rule, and yet in the summer of 1908 the President's
Alabama lieutenants took steps to return him to private life. By late
June, at the urging of Birmingham Internal Revenue Collector and
patronage referee J.O. Thompson, loyalist Republicans from Tallapoosa
County had challenged the honesty of Manning's post office administra-
tion. Joseph refuted the accusations in reports to his superiors, only to
discover that "any charge was an excuse . . . to annoy me with post office
inspectors." "I let them inspect," he later recalled, "and would then
show them how, what and who was behind it." At the same time he
appealed for help to J.F. Johnston, now a Democratic U.S. Senator, and to
W.E. Chandler. These powerful friends were able to persuade Thompson,
Frank Hitchcock, and other hostile "regulars" to delay Manning's removal.
Still, Chandler warned the embattled postmaster: "After [the] election
look out." 81 Throughout the fall and winter of 1908-1909 it is
likely that Manning continued to denounce Taft, but without supporting
Taft's Democratic opponent William J. Bryan. In fact Manning hoped that
he could, eventually, win his way back into favor with the national GOP.
He did not believe, like Frederick Douglass, that "the Republican Party
is the deck, all else is the sea," but he realized that in terms of practical politics the GOP, flawed though it was, provided the chief means of combatting the oppressive regional supremacy of the Southern Democracy.

As for Manning's activities on the local level, the evidence suggests that he spent his last months as postmaster fighting, through the columns of the Southern American, an Alexander City "doctor's trust." Evidently the town physicians had "made a compact to attend no man who owed another" doctor. Infuriated by Manning's stand on behalf of the poor, several of the medical men stirred up sentiment against him. "There I was in constant threat of personal harm," he recalled, and yet he "never surrendered to the skunks," but "fought them to the finish." A finish of a sort, however, came in March 1909, when Manning was replaced as postmaster. Locally and nationally, his career was at a low ebb; he was unemployed, unpopular with the "best" Southern people and the GOP hierarchy, and his natural constituency was largely disfranchised, demoralized by demagoguery, or both. There was in fact only one group within which a man of Manning's viewpoint and training could, in 1909, find acceptance and pursue his reformist calling—the interracial civil rights movement of the Northeast. In May, therefore, the thirty-nine year old Alabamian went to New York to visit friends who were about to launch a new liberal organization. In some respects he was traveling, as a later Southerner phrased it, "North toward home."
Footnotes to Chapter IX

1. Between 1895 and 1910 seven states accomplished disfranchisement by means of a constitutional convention or amendment. They were South Carolina (1895), Louisiana (1898), North Carolina (1900), Alabama (1901), Virginia (1901-1902), Georgia (1908), and Oklahoma (1910). During the same period the legislatures of Tennessee, Florida, Arkansas, and Texas passed laws designed to disfranchise blacks and "poor whites." See Woodward, Origins of the New South, 321.

2. Thomas Heflin was a well-to-do Democratic politician from Lafayette in Chambers County, Alabama. As a delegate to the constitutional convention of 1901 and during his career as a member of the Alabama legislature, he was a strident white supremacist. As a U.S. Senator (1920-1931) he was known as a defender of the second Ku Klux Klan and as a leader of the anti-Catholic opposition to the 1928 Democratic nomination of Governor Al Smith of New York. See Hackney, Populism to Progressivism, 180, 204-205; Francis Butler Simkins, A History of the South (3rd ed.; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), 543; and David Burner, The Politics of Provincialism: The Democratic Party in Transition, 1918-1932 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), 87, 88, 204.


5. Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, March 25, July 15, 1897, the Alexander City Outlook, March 26, April 30, 1897, the Ashland Clay County Advance, April 2, 1897, and the Opelika Industrial News, April 2, 23, 1897. See also J.C. Manning to Booker T. Washington, January 22, 1905, in the Booker T. Washington Papers, LC.
6. Dadeville Herald, February 18, 25, April 8, 1898, the Alexander City Outlook, February 18, June 24, 1898, and the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, March 3, 1898. While living in Texas and after returning to Alabama, Manning continued to make inquiries concerning a variety of federal jobs. On one occasion, he touted Zoa Manning for a vacant post office. See J.A. Porter to J.C. Manning, November 18, 1897, October 3, 17, 1898, in the William McKinley Papers, LC. Manning’s tenant farm was located in north-east Tallapoosa County just a few miles from his native Clay County. The author is indebted for this information to Mrs. J. Otis Lindsey of Alexander City, Alabama. See also the "Supplement to Tax Abstract, Beat Number 4," 1898, in the Tallapoosa County Courthouse, Dadeville, Alabama, for information on the location of Manning’s holding. The abstract does not list the number of acres, but the assessed value of Manning’s possessions ($107.00) places him above the poverty line without lifting him into the ranks of the affluent.

7. Alexander City Outlook, June 17, 1898, quoting the Dadeville Spot Cash. At the turn of the century, moonshining was widespread in the hills of Alabama. See Manning, Five To Twenty-Five, 74-76.

8. Alexander City Outlook, May 28, 1897, April 22, 1898, the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, March 10, 17, April 21, May 19, 1898, and the Dadeville Herald, May 20, June 17, 1898. In 1900, blacks made up thirty-two per cent of Tallapoosa County’s 40,000 residents. The county was divided into unequal “halves” by the Tallapoosa River, and the black population was similarly divided. The most politically active blacks lived near Camp Hill, Tallasee, and Dadeville (the county seat), in the larger eastern part of the county. Free expression and Republican politics were common among white yeomen in eastern Tallapoosa County, too; ever since 1861, when the plain folk sent a unionist delegation to the secession convention in Montgomery, the eastern beats had been a stronghold of social and political nonconformity. Another group of black Republicans lived in western Tallapoosa County, in and around the railroad and cotton marketing center of the county, Alexander City. In the county at large, the Lily White Republican faction was small, and centered about the personal influence of such businessmen as Blount Howie of Dadeville and textile-mill manager A.J. Milstead of Tallasee, both of whom wished to campaign solely upon the economic policies of the national GOP. See Hackney, Populism to Progressivism, Appendix I, 335, and Dodd and Dant, Historical Atlas of Alabama, 49, 74, 80.

9. Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, May 19, 26, June 30, July 21, 1898, and the Dadeville Herald, May 20, July 1, 8, 1898. R.A.J. Cumbee had been elected in 1896 with a considerable number of Populist votes. In 1898 he refused to run as a Democrat because the Democratic county executive committee had decided, contrary to current party practice, to nominate candidates through a convention, not a primary. The convention, as east-Tallapoosa County Cumbee had
foared, was dominated by silverites from east-Tallapoosa County, led by W.M. Lackey (once the Democratic chairman of Clay County) and Fitz Hooten, both residents of Alexander City. Lackey and Hooten engineered the probate judge nomination of a silverite named Harlan. The county goldbug faction, on the other hand, was headed by east-Tallapoosa Countyans J.W. Fleming and F.A. Vaughan, both of Dadeville. Fleming and Vaughan hastened to throw their support behind Populist candidate J.P. Oliver, another resident of Dadeville. Oliver’s candidacy was crippled, however, because the People’s Party was divided; at Populist councils and rallies, Oliver opposed and Jere Dennis supported black participation in party affairs. It is thus apparent that the course of Tallapoosa County politics in 1898 was determined by a complex series of personal, racial, financial, and intra-county geographical factors.

10. Dadeville Herald, July 8, 1898.

11. Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, August 25, 1898. Harlan won with approximately 2550 votes; Oliver came in second with 1350, and Cusibee polled 1100 votes.


15. Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, March 25, July 15, August 12, 1897, September 8, 1898, the Alexander City Outlook, April 30, 1897, and the Dadeville Herald, July 15, 22, 1898.

16. Several of Manning’s Item articles are quoted in the Alexander City Outlook, May 26, August 4, November 24, 1899. There are in addition indications that Manning regularly urged the McKinley administration to remove Youngblood from the patronage rolls. See J.A. Porter to J.C. Manning, April 18, 1898, January 26, 1900, and George Cortelyou to J.C. Manning, July 28, 1899, in the McKinley Papers. These letters are acknowledgements of comments and suggestions sent through the mail by Manning.

18. Alexander City Outlook, July 6, August 3, 1900, and J.C. Manning to W.E. Chandler, September 6, 28, 1900, in the Chandler Papers. For further information on Alexander City, see Owen, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, I, 37.

19. Alexander City Outlook, April 5, 1901, and J.C. Manning to W.E. Chandler, September 28, November 24, 1900, in the Chandler Papers.

20. J.C. Manning to W.E. Chandler, November 24, 27, December 13, 14, 15, 24, 1900, in the Chandler Papers. See also the Alexander City Outlook, October 5, 12, 26, December 14, 21, 1900.

21. Hackney, Populism to Progressivism, 147-166. Significantly, the officers of the 1898-1899 legislature were Senate President R.M. Cunningham of Jefferson County, a Bourbon businessman, and Speaker of the House Charles E. Waller, a Black Belt spokesman from Hale County. Other conservative leaders were Senators W.D. Jelks of Barbour County, a Black Belt editor, and A.A. Wiley of Montgomery County, a representative of railroad interests, and Representatives J. Thomas Heflin of Chambers County and A.M. Tunstall of Hale County. See the General Laws of the General Assembly of Alabama, Session of 1898-9 (Jacksonville, Florida: Vance Printing Company, 1899), 296-301. For evidence that Johnston's rural supporters were nervous over the prospect of a new constitution, see the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, August 5, 27, 1897.


23. Alexander City Outlook, May 26, 1899.

24. Ibid., May 12, 1899; see also Hackney, Populism to Progressivism, 169-170.

25. Alexander City Outlook, July 28, 1899, quoting the New Orleans Daily Item; for other comments on Manning's role in building up Johnston's preliminary "boom" for the U.S. Senate, see the Alexander City Outlook, June 9, August 11, September 1, 1899.

26. Hackney, Populism to Progressivism, 170-173. Johnston was feared by machine politicians all over the state for the manner in which his state auditors had rooted out corruption among sheriffs, probate judges, and tax collectors. These investigators, according to Democratic editor W.D. Jelks, uncovered "much that is dirty among state officers." See the Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, October 21, 1897, quoting the Befaula Times and News, the Dadeville Herald, April 8, 1898, and the Alexander City Outlook, February 17, 1899.


33. Dallas County, with a voting-age male population of 2,525 whites and 9,871 blacks, polled 8,125 votes for and 235 votes against the constitution. See Joseph C. Manning, *Letting the South Alone: Class Government that Defrauds Whites and Blacks* (Birmingham, Alabama: By the Author, 1903), 6-7, 9. *Letting the South Alone* is a pamphlet of fifteen pages, a reprint of a speech Manning gave before the Middlesex Club of Boston on Grant Night, April 27, 1903.

34. One of Manning's best assessments of the disfranchisement movement can be found in a Republican campaign pamphlet he wrote in 1916, entitled *Sectionalism: The Rise and Reign of the Southern Political Oligarchy* (New York: By the Author, 1916), 4-7. See also Manning, *Fadeout*, 49-51.
35. Rogers, One-Gallueed Rebellion, 236-240; for information on the failure of the Congressional Strategy, see above, Chapter VIII.


37. Manning, Letting the South Alone, 9; in particular, see a petition for the continuance in office of Postmaster Joseph Manning, sent by the "Undersigned colored citizens of Alexander City" to Booker T. Washington, November 17, 1904, in the Washington Papers.


39. J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 20, 1928, in the NAACP Papers. In a May 9, 1977, interview, Mrs. O.C. Thomas of Alexander City recalled that her father, who had been one of Manning's postal clerks, would come home complaining about the postmaster's policies. Mrs. Thomas could not remember exactly what her father said, but she recalled that he would pace around the house crying "Joe Manning! Joe Manning!"

40. Alexander City Outlook, January 11, February 8, April 5, 1901; see also the list of testimonials enclosed in J.C. Manning to W.E. Chandler, November 14, 1901, in the Chandler Papers.

41. Alexander City Outlook, May 3, 1901, and the Dadeville Free Press, October 24, 1901; see also J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 20, 1928, in the NAACP Papers. The balloon story was furnished by Mr. R.Y. Scott of Alexander City, in a February 5, 1977, interview. Manning was a churchman in good standing, as shown by records on file at the First United Methodist Church of Alexander City. See particularly the "Myer's Paramount Alphabetical Church Treasurer's Account Book" for 1904-1906.
42. J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 20, 1928, in the NAACP Papers. An excellent compilation of newspaper and oral sources relating to the fire of 1902 can be found in Jennie Lee Kelley, A History of Alexander City (Alexander City, Alabama: Alexander City Centennial Celebration Committee, 1974), Part III.

43. J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 20, 1928, in the NAACP Papers. Judge C.J. Coley and Mr. R.Y. Scott of Alexander City, both of whom were children during the first decade of the twentieth century, recall that their elders regarded Manning as a "pushy," brave outsider. In an October 15, 1976, interview, Judge Coley indicated that his family had liked Manning. In a February 5, 1977, interview, Mr. Scott stated that "there wasn't any harm" in Manning but added: "I believe that a town should be run by the people who have built up the community."

44. J.C. Manning to W.E. Chandler, October 5, 1901, in the Chandler Papers. For information on the Jones appointment, and on the blows which Roosevelt did indeed strike against the Hanna machines of the South, see Sherman, Republican Party and Black America, 29, and John M. Blum, The Republican Roosevelt (rev. ed.; New York: Atheneum Press, 1969), 44-46. Manning sent Roosevelt clippings and comments, probably relating to the Youngblood case; see Theodore Roosevelt to J.C. Manning, April 19, 1899, and William Loeb to J.C. Manning, April 24, 1899, in the Theodore Roosevelt Papers, LC.


47. Sherman, Republican Party and Black America, 30-31, 33-34. Clarkson had come to prominence as an expert on Southern affairs while serving as Assistant Postmaster General in the Harrison administration. By 1902 Manning had made Clarkson's acquaintance; he subsequently came to admire him as a man who was "for human rights at heart and in deed." See J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 15, 1928, in the NAACP Papers.
48. On the subject of the Constitution League, see Sherman, Republican Party and Black America, 49, 59, 62, 97. For information concerning Manning’s friendship with Fortune and Milholland, see J.C. Manning to Booker T. Washington, January 22, 1905, in the Washington Papers, and J.C. Manning to Governor Emmett O’Neal, April 11, 1911, in Box 203, Official Governors’ Papers.

49. Alexander City Outlook, February 20, 1903. Typical of the speakers invited to address the Middlesex Club were Senator Jeter Pritchard of North Carolina (1895) and Albert J. Beveridge of Indiana (1898). See the Raleigh Caucasian, May 9, 1895, and Claude G. Bowers, Beveridge and the Progressive Era (New York: Literary Guild, 1932), 67-68.


51. Manning, Letting the South Alone, 7-9; also see Hackney, Populism to Progressivism, 205-206. Presumably, Manning had studied census figures for Alabama.


54. Manning, Letting the South Alone, 13; see also Bowers, Beveridge, 67-68. Manning was speaking to an imperialist gathering in a town known for its anti-imperialist intellectuals; see Welch, George Fribie Hoar, 227-231.

55. J.C. Manning to W.E. Chandler, November 28, 1916, in the Chandler Papers; also see the Alexander City Outlook, February 20, 1903.

57. Daniel, Shadow of Slavery, 44. See A.P. Fuquay to Booker T. Washington, November 18, 1904, in the Washington Papers, for praise of Manning's "straightforward work on certain lines." Fuquay, the Democratic mayor of Alexander City, also commented that Manning had "fearlessly brought the public eye to fall upon certain evils that should not be permitted to exist," clearly a reference to anti-peonage work. For Manning's assessment of his own role in the peonage cases, see J.C. Manning to W.E. Chandler, November 28, 1916, in the Chandler Papers, and J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 17, 1928, in the NAACP Papers.


60. Ibid., 55-64.

61. Ibid., 44, 46-47, and J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 17, 1928, in the NAACP Papers. Villard, the grandson of William Lloyd Garrison, was a neo-abolitionist who, like John Milholland, worked to keep civil rights agitation alive. It is difficult to say whether Villard and Manning knew each other in 1903-1904. In 1909, however, both men participated in launching the NAACP. See Charles Flint Kallog, NAACP: A History of the National Association For the Advancement of Colored People, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), 3, 14-16, 287 n. 41.


63. Ibid., 55-56; for a smug account of Grimes' trial, see the Alexander City Outlook, March 31, 1905. Statistical analyses of lynchings indicate that the frequency of the crime itself was declining; in the 1880's the average number of lynchings per year was 187.5, while in the first decade of the twentieth century the average was "only" 92.5. Over the same period, though, the percentage of lynchings committed in the South rose from 82 to 92, and the percentage of blacks among those individuals lynched grew from 67.8 to 88.6. See Woodward, Origins of the New South, 351-352.
64. Manning, *Rise and Reign*, 8. James K. Vardaman, an ex-newspaperman, had been elected Governor of Mississippi in 1903. On one occasion he had referred to the Negro as "a lazy, lying, lustful animal which no conceivable amount of training can transform into a tolerable citizen." See Kirwan, *Revolt of the Rednecks*, 99, 147-161.

65. Among other activities, Manning began an intensive study of census records, Alabama educational and criminal records, and state and regional election returns. He used the information thus gained in his speeches and pamphlets, including *Letting the South Alone* (1903) and *Rise and Reign of the Bourbon Oligarchy* (1904). For references to Manning's deserved reputation as an authority on the effects of the disfranchisement system, see *The Crisis*, 1 (November, 1910), 3, 7, and II (August, 1911), 150, and the Montgomery Colored Alabamian, February 21, 28, March 7, 14, 1914.


67. Manning, *Rise and Reign*, 9, 10-13, 17. Hackney, *Populism to Progressivism*, 219, agrees that the convention of 1901 "froze" into "that same fundamental law which was eliminating Negro voters the assurance that Negroes would be counted for purposes of apportionment."


69. Manning, *Rise and Reign*, 14-16. In addition, Manning compared the voter turnout in selected Northern congressional districts with that of whole Southern states. He pointed out, for example, that in Indiana's tenth district in 1902, the vote for all congressional candidates "was 46,158 or 13,973 more ballots than were polled for the entire South Carolina delegation."

70. Manning, *Rise and Reign*, 12, 14, 16. In *Populism to Progressivism*, 206-208, Hackney estimates that a minimum of 23.6 per cent of the white voting-age population of Alabama was disfranchised in 1904 by the poll tax requirement alone. Hackney also quotes Black Belt spokesman John Sanford who, when asked whether Christ would be allowed to register under a "good character" clause of the constitution, replied: "That would depend entirely on which way he was going to vote." See also Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 342-349.

71. Ibid., 8, 18-20. Benjamin Tillman was, in the 1890's and early 1900's, the "governor, United States senator, and complete political master of South Carolina." As such he ranked with Vardaman of Mississippi as one of the most virulent and conspicuous racists in the
South. See Simpkins, A History of the South, 351, 505. For support of Manning's view that Southern Democratic politicians actively directed and intensified the racial attitudes of white plain folk, see Dan Lacey, The White Use of Blacks in America: 350 Years of Law and Violence, Attitudes and Etiquette, Politics and Change (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), 98-138. Manning was correct in asserting that the rape of white women by black men was a crime infrequently committed. A study published in 1905 demonstrated that "between 1882 and 1903 rape was the alleged cause of the lynching of Negroes in only about a third of the cases"; see Sherman, Republican Party and Black America, 64.


73. Manning, Rise and Reign, 26.


75. For Manning's correspondence during these years, see the "Window Registration Books" for 1904-1906 (one volume), 1906, 1907, and 1908-1910 (one volume), filed in the Alexander City Post Office. For hints of Manning's friendship with Judkins, see the Montgomery Colored Alabamian, October 26, 1907, and November 21, 1914. Judkins' editorial activities were an absorbing sideline to his career as pastor of the Dexter Avenue Church. As an editor, he believed that "the political rights of the race should be our first consideration," and he urged blacks to take a more active political role than that which B.T. Washington publicly advised. And yet—possibly because he enjoyed an independent source of income—Judkins remained on good terms with Washington. See the Colored Alabamian, January 11, 1908, February 3, 1912, and January 9, 1915. For information on Washington's usual method of dealing with militant black editors, see Louis R. Harlan, "Booker T. Washington and the Voice of the Negro, 1904-1907," Journal of Southern History, XLI (February, 1979), 45-62. Manning's disagreement with Washington was to an extent related to his inability to find a suitable position after 1904. After his
reappointment that year as postmaster, Manning evidently encountered increased social hostility in Alexander City and suffered bouts of ill health. Consequently, believing that his services had entitled him to a better post in the diplomatic service or in Washington, D.C., he began making inquiries. Roosevelt, he knew, made appointments in the Southern states based on the recommendations of trusted individuals, or "patronage referees," and two important Alabama referees, Charles Scott of Montgomery and J.O. Thompson of Birmingham, were Washington allies. Scott and Thompson, however, beguiled Manning with promises of positions which never materialized, and Washington refused to confer with him over the matter. Joseph concluded that the Alabama GOP was once more becoming a closed corporation run for the benefit of a few men. See J.C. Manning to Booker T. Washington, October 15, November 20, 1904, January 10, 21, 22, 1905, J.C. Manning to Emmett J. Scott, February 2, 1905, and Booker T. Washington to J.C. Manning, October 18, November 26, 1904, January 21 (227), 1905, in the Washington Papers. Also see J.C. Manning to W.E. Chandler, November 25, December 16, 1905, in the Chandler Papers. On a broader level, Manning was disgusted with Washington's unwillingness or inability to criticize publicly the increasingly racist course of the Roosevelt and Taft administrations. Only the March 24, 1909, issue of the Alexander City Southern American (Volume III) still exists. In that issue, Manning deals sarcastically with Taft's pro-disfranchisement utterances and charges Washington with being an "apologist" for the Southern Democratic regimes.


77. Sherman, Republican Party and Black America, 77-79, and Mowry, Era of Theodore Roosevelt, 200, 211, 213-214. For information on the black pro-Foraker, anti-Taft rallies, see the Montgomery Colored Alabamian, November 30, 1907, February 15, March 21, 1908.

78. Sherman, Republican Party and Black America, 77-80, and the Alexander City Southern American, March 24, 1909. See also the Montgomery Colored Alabamian, October 26, December 14, 1907, and J.C. Manning to W.E. Chandler, February 29, 1908, in the Chandler Papers. Years later, Manning wrote: "In 1908 I fought the nomination of Taft [and] resisted the Hitchcock steam roller." See J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 17, 1928, in the NAACP Papers.


81. J.C. Manning to W.E. Chandler, June 24, 1908, in the Chandler Papers, and J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 15, 17, 1928, in the NAACP Papers.

82. For evidence of Manning's continuing Republicanism, see The Crisis, I (November, 1910), 3. For information on Douglass' view of the Republican Party, see DuBois, Black Reconstruction, 367.

CHAPTER X
YEARS OF EXILE: 1909-1930

After his dismissal from the Alexander City Post Office, Joseph Manning refused to give up hope of alerting the nation to the injustices commonly practiced in the political and social life of the South. Denying himself the security of a settled existence, he spent much of the remaining two decades of his life moving from rented room to rented room, or living with friends, while speaking and conferring with reformers and politicians in Birmingham, Washington, Boston, New York, and other cities. On several occasions he tried to secure another patronage job, but unsympathetic Republican administrations always put him off. In the 1910's and early 1920's, he performed a certain amount of political and journalistic hack-work, for he retained both a lively hatred of the Democracy and the embers of his one-time trust in the GOP. In the main, though, thanks to the patronage of a few influential white men and dozens of black friends, Manning occupied the unusual position of independent publicist and agitator for the cause of constitutional liberty. He had to plan carefully, spend prudently, and humble himself with frequent pleas to his allies and sponsors for money. Moreover, his increasing preoccupation with reform left him little time for a private life, with the result that he spent longer and longer periods apart from his family, and ultimately was estranged
from his wife Zoe. Joseph, however, was no stranger to hardship, frustration, and sacrifice. Newspaper photographs taken late in life show a small, plainly-dressed man, whose expression of determination and tenacity seems to have been permanently stamped on his face. With just such an attitude—unwavering in democratic faith, but without expectation of immediate victory—he entered the national civil rights movement in 1909.¹

After a terrible race riot at Springfield, Illinois, in August 1908 left eight people dead and hundreds of black people homeless, a number of concerned intellectuals and activists began to discuss how best to protect and further the rights of American Negroes. During the fall and winter of 1908-1909 Oswald Garrison Villard met in New York with Kentucky-born socialist William English Walling, Unitarian social worker Mary White Ovington, and other "neo-abolitionists." By Washington's Birthday, 1909, sixty prominent men and women had signed a call, written by Villard, for "A Conference on the Status of the Negro."² A thousand invitations were subsequently sent out to scholars, editors, scientists, philanthropists, and ministers, black and white, and from May 31 to June 1 hundreds of delegates attended meetings at New York's Charity Organization Hall and at Cooper Union. The speakers included academic figures such as W.E.B. Du Bois, John Dewey, and E.R.A. Seligman, all of whom criticized the socio-economic effects of disfranchisement, Jim Crow legislation, and racial violence. The well-known scientists Livingstone Ferrand and Burt G. Wilder employed anthropological and biological evidence to refute the theory of the
"inherent inferiority" of dark-skinned races. The white South was represented on the platform by at least two individuals, historian John Spencer Bassett of Smith College, an ex-North Carolinian, and Joseph Manning, who was probably staying with his friend John Milholland in New York. Manning, true to his heritage of biracial class politics, addressed a gathering of 1500 on "The Effect on Poor Whites of Discrimination Against Negroes." Du Bois noted approvingly that Joseph, "slight, angular and bitter," asserted that "the enslavement and disfranchisement of the white workingman was already following the oppression of the black." After the conference was over a distinguished "Committee of Forty" was charged with founding a formal organization, and within a year the conference sponsors and committee had created the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. From the first, the NAACP was committed to the principle of "equal rights and opportunities for all," and to investigating, publicizing, and agitating against racial discrimination. And from the first Manning was an active, even a conspicuous member of the NAACP rank-and-file.

In the first issue of the NAACP magazine The Crisis (November 1910), editor W.E.B. Du Bois quoted Manning on the condition and objectives of Alabama's educational system. Making use of state records, Manning observed that of 731,599 school-age children, at least 133,618 largely upcountry whites and 111,500 blacks were not enrolled in 1906-1907. Of the children who were enrolled, whites outnumbered blacks two to one, though the overall number of eligible whites was not correspondingly larger than that of the blacks.
Evidently, the educational officials of Alabama were content to see the perpetuation of lower class illiteracy and political helplessness. In April 1912, after President Taft had belatedly denounced lynching and racial prejudice in a Washington, D.C., address, Du Bois asked Manning to help in obtaining a statement of the chief executive's "attitude toward the colored people of the United States." Neither Du Bois nor Manning was able to secure a satisfactory answer from the beleaguered President. But Manning, who spent several weeks in Washington in the spring of 1912 in the hope that he could exert an influence on the administration, suggested a four-point racial policy which, if enunciated in a Crisis article, would enable Taft to "attract the Colored Americans as has no other President." First, he believed, Taft should assert that "lynching is anarchy and murder, justifiable under no circumstances, and must be stopped." Second, "there should be no discrimination because of race or color in the education of the American people." Third, "All state enactments which . . . are intended to deny equal suffrage rights because of race or color are . . . contrary to the spirit of the Constitution." And fourth, "It [is] as much the duty of the federal government to protect the lives of citizens at home as it [is] to protect the lives of citizens abroad." Thus he pressed an activist philosophy upon the administration, though he knew full well that the civil rights pledges of Republican politicians were often "not worth the paper they are written upon." In general, despite frustrations and disappointments, Manning persisted during the teens in a
variety of reform activities, most of which related both to the purposes of the NAACP and to his personal preoccupation with combating Bourbon rule in the South.

In 1915, for example, R.C. Judkins informed the readers of the Montgomery Colored Alabamian that Manning had "for several months been in Boston, Massachusetts, where he has taken part in every movement to create sentiment favorable to our cause, and to check the tendency to spread Southern sentiment throughout the North and East." During the course of his lecturing tours, Manning was especially careful to point out the limited popular base of the Bourbon governments. "I am trying to make the people of the North realize what the condition of politics is in the South," he told an audience in Brockton, Massachusetts, adding: "It is popularly believed that the big majority of white [men] in the South are Democrats, [but] the opposition vote to the Democratic Party, the white vote and the black vote, has been kept down through frauds of many kinds." At times, indeed, he was dumbfounded over the obtuseness of his fellow-reformers. "You persist," he wrote to W.E. Chandler, "in making the cause of political justice in the South a question of 'Negro suffrage.'" Such an attitude, he emphasized, was positively helpful to the Southern racial propagandists:

I know that this Southern question is a broader one than merely involving the rights of the Negro citizen, and that failure to realize this, on the part of Northern statesmen, has been hurtful to the Negro himself—for the Southern oligarchy desires that this question shall be so attributed as a fight for the Negro solely; it wishes to get it in the mind of the North, that in the South it is
'white man against the Negro.' In fact, the case is that it is the machine Democracy of the South prostituting government and exonerating its rascality because of the presence of its [sic] Negro in the South.9

Certainly, Manning did not consider that the repression of black Americans was a secondary problem. Rather, he regarded blacks as the more vulnerable half of what he called the "submerged South," the biracial lower class. By the 1910's, furthermore, Manning had outgrown completely the condescending air and tone which characterized many of his utterances on racial affairs in the 1890's. He recognized, as he later told NAACP official Walter White, that a multitude of blacks had "found . . . channels of escape from ignorance and limitations," and that thanks to a racial sense of spiritual unity, "the burdens put upon the Negro have not altogether weighted him down, but . . . added to his strength and . . . made of [him], as is said of the Jews, God's chosen people." Meanwhile, he continued, "the poor white has been the pitiful figure in the tragedy; he thinks being white is glory enough and steeped in the propaganda of hate he swallows his plight in submission and hurrahs for the political ascendancy of his oppressors." Still, Manning continued to argue, as he did before a 1914 meeting of the predominantly black "Order of Good Shepherds" in Montgomery, that "the Negroes and a certain class of whites have a 'common cause.'"10

Another aspect of the consistency of Manning's class viewpoint is apparent in a comment he made concerning the much-discussed 1915 lynching of Leo M. Frank, an Atlanta Jewish factory manager accused of molesting and murdering a fourteen year-old white girl. After a number
of prominent white Southerners had deplored the action of the Georgia mob, Manning proclaimed with deep, if awkward disgust, that:

Futility as cowardly as the lynching of Frank is this business of now coming forward with expressions of horror on the part of the lynch-bred South. It is a hypocritical attitude... The mob-spirit is the spirit of the South. It is interwoven in the social and political life... The lynch-bred spirit has mobbed Negroes, lynched the American constitution, and is now given to lynching white Americans!11

In the course of the twenty years after he lost his postmastership, Manning enjoyed contact and friendship with several of the guiding spirits of the NAACP, including Clarence Darrow, Arthur B. and Joel E. Springarn, Mary White Ovington, Louis T. Wright, Arthur Garfield Hayes, and William Pickens. In addition, he was on good terms with Boston lawyer Butler R. Wilson and Massachusetts political reformer S.W. McCall, who were instrumental in investigating segregated army camps after World War I.12 Perhaps Manning's best friend among NAACP figures was Walter S. White, a young black Atlantan who became Assistant Secretary of the organization in 1918 after years of anti-lynching work. In late 1928 at the onset of his last period of illness, Manning sent White a remarkable series of autobiographical letters. In them, the dying Southerner discusses his battles within the People's Party and the GOP, rails against the "preacher-politician" prohibitionists who were attempting to regulate the nation's morals, and vents his scorn upon the narrow-mindedness of the second Ku Klux Klan. At the end of one letter he confesses to White that "this personal letter to you has gone into more detail than I have ever gone..."
into . . . before with anyone. Why? I feel that it interests you—at heart. Manning also made friends, as he traveled throughout the Northeast, with quite a few black professional men. Among his frequent hosts and sponsors were Sumner H. Lark of the Brooklyn Eve, Dr. A.P. Russell of Boston (Manning's personal dentist), Harlem newspaperman and Republican politician Arthur J. Gary, attorney Joseph H. Stewart of Washington, D.C., and Sergeant B.M. McKay, Washington-based Secretary of the "Supreme Council of Affiliated Societies" (a congress of black associations). There is evidence, too, that Manning was known by reputation and respected by black people "of all shades of opinion and belief" among the hundreds of thousands who thronged the Northern cities during the "Great Migration" of the early twentieth century. In 1917, over three thousand Negros assembled in New York City to hear Rhode Island businessman and civil rights activist William M.P. Bowen give an address "in honor of the thirty years activity of Joseph C. Manning for human justice." Stressing the steadfast continuity of Manning's service--"he has reached many minds that count, and he has often, almost unaided, kept burning the light that shows the way to a just freedom"--Bowen advised all friends of liberty to "support, with such means as we can afford the work of those who, like Mr. Manning, are devoting their . . . labor to the cause of truth." Apparently Manning's friends, humble and well-to-do, were generous; for while he never again held a patronage post or any permanent position, he was able to conduct numerous campaigns of education in the 1910's. Regrettably though, dedication, love and appreciation, and generosity could not of themselves prevail. As Joseph knew, and as Bowen hinted, he must
have access to and influence with men of power if he expected to attain his goals. Therefore, he continued to engage in politics, usually as a volunteer speaker and writer. As always, his existence was turbulent and nomadic, and his finances uncertain. Zoe Manning, who chose to remain in Birmingham, almost certainly made it clear that she resented his prolonged and unprofitable absences. Yet he persisted, to the detriment of his private affairs.\(^{15}\)

Between 1910 and 1930 a flood of black migrants poured into the urban centers of the nation—perhaps a quarter of a million into New York alone—seeking better wages and a more independent life.\(^{16}\) Most of the new arrivals were Republican by conviction and habit, and their continued loyalty became a matter of importance to state and local politicians. Hence, even before the height of migration several Republican congressmen, including Leonidas C. Dyer of St. Louis and Martin B. Madden of Chicago, both of whom represented heavily black districts, were willing to back anti-lynching and equal accommodations proposals. On the other hand, the national leadership of the GOP, under the Taft, Harding, and Coolidge administrations and during the Wilson years, was increasingly concerned with pleasing a white middle-class, business-oriented electorate. Negroes, said W.E.B. Du Bois, could expect only "neglect, indifference and misunderstanding" from Republican chief executives and presidential candidates.\(^{17}\) The defection of black voters reached serious levels as early as the federal elections of 1912, and high-level Republican strategists, informed if not greatly concerned
about the problem, employed a number of popular orators to rally enthusiasm and support for the "party of emancipation." Among these individuals were Southern black politicians Henry Lincoln Johnson of Georgia and Robert Church of Tennessee, Harlem political figures Charles Anderson, Charles Roberts, and Arthur J. Gary, black federal office-holders such as Auditor of the Navy Ralph W. Tyler and Register of the Treasury James C. Napier, and almost in a class by himself, Joseph C. Manning. 18

Manning was under no illusions as to the civil rights record of what he once called "the commercialized 'boot-and-shoe' element of political tradesmen in the Republican Party." Nonetheless he remained convinced that if democratic changes were ever to be made in Southern politics, the impetus must come from the federal government through the efforts of civil libertarians within the GOP. One such friend whose influence helped keep Manning on the campaign trail was Winthrop Murray Crane, head of the famous Crane Paper Company and Senator from Massachusetts (1904-1912). Crane, who had known Joseph since before the intra-party strife over Taft's nomination in 1908, was subsequently instrumental in persuading Taft to dethrone a number of Southern patronage referes, including Manning's enemy J.O. Thompson of Alabama. Partly out of gratitude to Crane and partly because he distrusted Taft less than Progressive Party candidate Theodore Roosevelt or Democratic candidate Woodrow Wilson, Manning supported the straight Republican ticket in 1912.19

By 1916, after President Wilson had filled many traditionally "black" offices with white Democrats and countenanced a thorough-
going racial segregation of federal employees, Manning was con-
formed and reinforced in his loyalty to the GOP. His chief con-
tribution to the Wilson–Charles Evans Hughes presidential race of 1916,
however, was a twelve-page pamphlet released in October or November,
entitled Sectionalism: The Rise and Reign of the Southern Political
Oligarchy. Seizing upon Wilson's statement that "anyone who raises
the issue of sectionalism in this country . . . shows himself . . .
to be ignorant," Manning recapitulated the historical arguments of
Letting the South Alone and Rise and Reign of the Bourbon Oligarchy,
and pointed out that more recently and typically:

Under the 'new freedom' of Woodrow Wilson,
192,741 white and 234,212 colored male citizens
of voting age in Mississippi stand by and look
on while the oligarchy rules . . . They know that
the oligarchy has made an opposition party well
nigh impossible and that attempts at opposition,
if formidable, are met with fraud, cunning and,
when necessary, violence. They wonder, as they look
on, that the public sentiment of the nation is not
awakened to this condition, . . . which is as hum-
iliating, as oppressive, as intolerable as was
that other slavery in the years of the slave own-
ing oligarchy.²⁰

During Wilson's second administration Manning stepped up his
political activities, more determined than ever to see the end of
Democratic control of the federal government. He was particularly
disturbed, in 1915–1916, to note the revival and subsequent political
influence of the Ku Klux Klan, a renaissance sparked in part by the
"deadly poisonous work" and influence of the racist "photo-play" of
Reconstruction, "The Birth of a Nation." Within a few years the Klan,
under the leadership of Texas dentist (and ex-Clay County Alabamian)
Hiram Evans, had established its influence far beyond the borders of
the South. And with the Klan, wrote Manning, spread "the KuKlux tradi-
duction and heesmirching of [the] history that means so much to the
Negro; more than that, the history that has in it the most there is
of high and lofty ideals as by Americans." Thus "Southern sentiment"
had triumphed again, in the form of a basically Southern Democratic
view of the nation's past. Similarly, though he left only scant
opinions of the United States' participation in the First World War,
Manning could not help but see the inequalities of Southern society
mirrored in segregated army camps and in the Wilson administration's
prosecution of the war effort as a whole. He was shocked almost
certainly by the increasing frequency of Northern race riots from
1915 to 1919; conversely he approved of the militancy with which the
NAACP and black veterans and journalists demanded an anti-lynching law
and equal opportunities for black citizens. He hoped, indeed, that the
assertive "New Negroes" of the post-war urban North would help reclaim
the whole race's legacy of freedom. The country, Manning believed,
had incurred a special obligation to its recent black defenders:
"If the flesh and blood of the colored people . . . were full-sufficient
to be hurled against the German army," he once observed, "then . . .
they are good enough to enjoy the rights the [Civil] War Amendments
were intended to bequeath to them." In late 1919 Manning came into contact with two Republican
presidential contenders, Senator Miles Poindexter of Washington and
Senator Warren G. Harding of Ohio. Manning talked with both men
about making black voters a more vital force in the GOP, and the
two politicians arranged for an existing "Republican Publicity Associa-
tion" to provide him with an expense account for a few months of speaking and writing. Later, when Harding won the Republican nomination Manning decided to work for the ticket, for "Harding had assured me he was interested in the cause I had at heart and I believed it." Manning volunteered his services on a strictly independent basis, however, since he had learned to distrust several individuals who would be key figures in the upcoming campaign and administration. He especially detested party Chairman Will Hays, who had been instrumental in excluding numerous "black and tan" delegates from the national convention, and Harding's secretary George B. Christian, who "had no sympathy with anything I stood for." In all probability Manning's enthusiasm for Harding was largely the result of a feeling, shared by other NAACP members, that the nominee was a well-intentioned man who would not stand in the way of civil rights legislation. After all, the GOP platform of 1920 contained, at long last, an anti-lynching plank, and the future President had readily announced his conviction that "the Negro citizens of America should be guaranteed the full enjoyment of all their rights." At any rate Joseph labored from 1919 through 1920 to bring about a Republican victory, and Harding was the beneficiary of his dedication. Indeed, Attorney General Harry Daugherty later remarked that Manning was "a remarkable man in some ways. He got more good publicity for us ... preceding the President's nomination, I think, than any other one man, and he asked no compensation." But for all his honest effort and high hopes Manning was doomed to disillusionment following the Republican landslide of 1920.
With regard to civil rights matters, according to one authority, Harding the candidate "aroused expectations that he did not fulfill."
The explanation lies, in part, in the fact that the GOP presidential slate had carried all but one of the "border states," including Tennessee, and had "registered distinct gains" in every Southern state. There seemed to be a good possibility of building up a forceful middle and upper-class Republican Party within the region, a party grounded upon the new President's appeals for national unity and the application of business principles in government. Consequently Harding, in his appointment policy and in public speeches, attempted to reassure white Southerners. Yet the administration's worst concession to racism, from the viewpoint of Manning and the NAACP, was its failure to live up to the GOP's anti-lynching plank. After Harding in his first message to Congress made a vague reference to the "stain of barbaric lynching," Representative Leonidas C. Dyer submitted a bill designed to make it a federal offense for any "mob or riotous assemblage" to deprive "any person of his life without authority of law as a punishment for . . . some actual or supposed public offense." Conscious of the growing black constituencies in the cities, Northern Republicans steered the measure through the House in January of 1922, only to see it filibustered to death in the Senate in November and December. At no point in the bill's slow, arduous progress toward ultimate defeat did the President speak or act on its behalf, despite repeated requests from the NAACP. To Manning, Harding's apathy and the helplessness of the twenty-seat GOP Senate majority were supremely frustrating and demoralizing. "I knew, had learned through conversations," he told
Walter White, "that the Republican leaders were not going to do a thing for human justice, were making 'a play' as to the Dyer Bill, and were not going to give the Negro any recognition to speak of."

Feeling a physical breakdown coming on, Manning published a blistering "manifesto" titled "They All Favored the Dyer Bill," and withdrew from politics. He was only fifty-two years old but, unknown to him, his public career was virtually at an end. 27

During the latter part of his life Joseph Manning was necessarily a lonely man. By the mid-1910's, he was living in a more or less settled fashion in New York, first on West 34th Street and later on Manhattan Avenue. Yet when his twenty-three year-old niece Gladys came to town in 1920 to study art and act in silent films, she discovered that "Uncle Joe" was keeping house with only his son Denison, who was then in his teens. Zoe Manning and four other children (two girls and two boys) were living in Alabama. Joseph and Zoe were never divorced, though it is clear that their marital troubles dated back to the period when Manning was postmaster of Alexander City. Zoe's relation by marriage, Mrs. J. Otis Lindsey, remembers that within the family, the Mannings were long considered to be an unhappy couple. 28

Nothing is known of Zoe Manning's political beliefs--Manning mentioned her in neither his letters to Walter White nor his autobiographical works--but while Denison Manning evidently shared his father's views, another son was "a 'good Klansman'" in Birmingham. Not surprisingly, then, Manning chose to remain largely cut off from his family through-
out the 1920's. He related to White the story of how one of his
brothers had at some unspecified time come to New York, found him
in temporarily straitened circumstances, and made an offer of
assistance on the condition that he give up civil rights activities.
Joseph, suspecting correctly that the brother was an active member of
the Klan, received him coldly. It was not easy to live according to
consistent principles, but Manning accepted the emotional and financial
consequences of his life's work. 29

Manning realized that as he pursued the life of a public speaker
and lobbyist, his family and political opponents asked themselves:
"'What does he do?' Again, 'How does he live?'" There were rumors,
he knew, that he was "living upon agitation," but he was in no hurry
to clear up the mystery of his monetary affairs. "That is . . . no
bodys [sic] business but my own," he wrote White. 30 Certainly friends
and enemies alike knew that Manning was a failure in his efforts to
obtain a patronage job. The Taft administration had greeted his
suggestions and importunities with indifference or even silence--per-
haps understandably, considering his stand in 1908-1909. And after
Harding's election Manning, who had made known his desire for an
appointment commensurate with his services, was offered first a
position in the marine "War Risk" insurance bureau, and next, when the
War Risk slot was awarded to another candidate by "mistake," a low-
paying post as a recorder of deeds. Joseph refused to become a recorder
because "the job by precedent belonged to the colored people," and
because he was increasingly distrustful of the Harding administration:
"Corruption and Daughertyism . . . was [sic] getting to be a stench." 31
Manning received some money through journalistic work, "publicity" subsidies of the sort he obtained in 1919-1920, and donations from NAACP hackers and other reformers, but such incomes were not sufficient to pay for both living expenses and his periodic tours, or "drives, now and then, for human justice." For a steady income, he confided to Walter White, he depended for years on a private, almost secret retainer paid by "one very able, very sincere and conscientious man, a Senator and a man of big business,... [who] really enjoyed seeing me turn loose and use what I got my hands on in 'ripping up the back' some of the political hypocrites" in both parties. The Senator was probably Manning's friend Murray Crane, who died while Manning was campaigning for Harding. Crane's patronage had allowed his political "consultant" to work "as best I could,... in my own way," without having "to bother with explanations [to] everyone who threw rocks at me." Crane's death, was more than an economic blow to Manning who, alienated from his own family, had watched his old benefactors and allies—George F. Hoar, James S. Clarkson, William E. Chandler—pass away one by one. "[Crane] and Clarkson," he sadly observed in 1928, "there were few like them then. None now remain." Bereft of financial security and an important element of psychological support, and totally without confidence in the future course of the GOP, Manning speedily surrendered to despair and sickness.

Manning had long been subject to sieges of ill health. In 1894-1895 and 1903-1905 he had complained of feebleness and exhaustion. But in 1922-1924, as the result of a possible combination of bronchitis and influenza, "my... health gave way." Depressed and feeling that
he "had done enough for one man," he left New York City as soon as he was able and boarded on an unidentified farm, where he also worked "raising vegetables, flowers and chickens." How long Manning supported himself in this manner is uncertain, nor is it clear when his malady became more serious than the lingering results of mental fatigue and bodily weakness. Between 1924 and 1927, in any event, Manning discovered a growth upon his neck and began to experience pains in his throat and shoulders. For a long time he tried to ignore this new problem, but at last he returned "to New York to try to learn what it was about and learned—learned too, that I had waited too long."

A doctor, Walter Gray Crump, later informed Walter White that Joseph's ailment was "inoperable cancer of the throat which has already spread to the lymphatics of the neck." Manning's personal physician, a Dr. Martin, decided that the disease could be retarded if the now-multiplying growths were treated with radium seeds. Manning consented, knowing that he would thus be deprived of the power of speech for intervals of several weeks at a time. It was while he was taking the radium treatments, which evidently began in late 1927 and continued well into 1929, that Joseph began his autobiographical writings; in addition, during the particularly bad month of December 1928, he opened a correspondence with White "as a sort of relief, . . . and as an outlet." Frequently his morale was "down to zero," and not without reason. "The nerves in my arms and shoulders feel as though I had a myriad of needles in them," he told White, adding: "It is very difficult for my mind to overcome [the pain] to induce rest. There is a hard fight here for me but I am doing my best."
When he first returned to New York Manning contacted no one but his physician. Yet by the end of 1928, to his delight, a number of NAACP leaders had heard of his condition and organized a relief fund. In response to a plea from Walter White, such reformers as Louis T. Wright, Joel E. and Arthur Spingarn, Mary White Ovington, and Arthur Garfield Hayes, contributed sums ranging from five to fifty dollars, while Clarence Darrow gave Manning one hundred dollars, visited him frequently, and sent him books to read. Joseph's old friend Arthur J. Gary, now writing for the Chicago Defender, founded a "Joseph C. Manning Society" which solicited aid from "friends of Mr. Manning's work" in many cities of the North. Finally, Mrs. Charles H. Denison, widow of a New York Republican with whom Joseph had long been on close terms, undertook to help provide him with lodging, food, and medicine, and eventually ordered the arrangements for his funeral. For more than two years, therefore, he was able to live on at his small apartment on Manhattan Avenue, busy with his memories and his writing, and fighting daily with the pain which slowly sapped his strength and concentration.  

The gallant manner in which Manning held cancer at bay was an inspiration to his friends, and yet all knew that his was a losing battle. And so it was that in the spring of 1930 the malignancies broke out again with fresh violence, forcing him to abandon his apartment and take to a hospital bed. His death came on May 19, just two days before his sixtieth birthday, at the House of Calvary Infirmary on Featherbed Lane, in the Bronx. Surrounded by a small group of black and white acquaintances, he died after scribbling a note
proclaiming: "I go to my end without a regret." Black newspapers such as the New York Amsterdam News and the Chicago Defender printed laudatory obituaries praising Manning as a martyr for the principle of equality, emphasizing, however, that a martyr's reward must be with God and not in this hostile world. The Crisis, and the majority of white newspapers in New York and Alabama failed to mention Manning's death at all.\(^5\) Joseph would not have been surprised that his passing received so little notice; in his last years he had anticipated that his life's work might not seem to be "of much importance, if any," in contemporary America. But for all his travail he had not lost the core of his faith in the ultimate triumph of human freedom. Hence, grasping an opportunity seldom granted to any man, he had penned his own valedictory statements in a conscious effort to speak from beyond the grave. His attempts to communicate took the form of two book-length memoirs, The Fadeout of Populism; Pot and Kettle in Combat, and From Five To Twenty-Five, His Earlier Life as Recalled by Joseph Columbus Manning, both of which testify to the triumph of democratic impulses in his career.\(^6\)

The Fadeout of Populism, written between early 1927 and February 1928, has been a crucial source and reference in the composition of the present work. In Fadeout Manning described the motives and aims of the agrarian movement, and retold the story of the Bourbon election frauds and class legislation which had destroyed the People's Party. Likewise he discussed the Democratic use of the "race issue [which] was fanned to white heat all during the course of the Southern political
campaign[*]" for the purpose of distracting and deceiving the white yeomen of the region. "It was all planned and executed," he said, "to furnish a shot-gun setting of political tyranny and self-degrading mob politics, thus continuing minority rule." Beyond the history of Populism, beyond denunciation of the Southern Democratic Party, however, Manning was determined to record a long-considered criticism of the national GOP. Reflecting on his years as a biracial leader in Alabama, and on the strenuous opposition he and his allies had mounted against successive Washington-backed bosses, Joseph understood that true reformers had for decades been outside the mainstream of the party:

Republican politicians in the North have never permitted the local political usefulness of any Southern Republican to stand in the way of their every-four-year delegate fixing in the South. A comprehension of the low ideals of Northern Republican politicians . . . by the Republicans of the South, makes it most difficult for self-respecting men to participate in Republican Party politics.

Thinking back, too, on the paens to equal rights and fair treatment often made to American blacks by GOP spokesmen—sometimes by the same leaders who in national conventions had manipulated Lily White machines—he remarked bitterly that

One conception, and only one, can be placed upon Republican . . . oratory and . . . platform declarations . . . It [sic] has been to impress and place the conscience vote of the . . . element of sincerity had long since . . . Norton . . . since disappeared into the background . . . Manning noted that recently, as he observed the "materialistic" and "capitalist-glorified" Coolidge administration, he wondered whether
"there is nothing remaining of . . . the name and fame of Lincoln
to bolster up the degenerating Republican Party of today." Based
on his experience, he was forced to conclude that political conflict
between the Democratic Party and the GOP was of little more signifi-
cance than the proverbial dispute between the pot and the kettle.
While millions of people were disfranchised, degraded and corrupted
in the South, America's elected officials debated the morality of the
Prohibition Amendment! The Bourbon oligarchies had never seemed so
secure; and yet Manning, who believed that the triumph of any
privileged class was, "in a democracy, the setting of the sun," never
gave up hope.39

At the close of his turbulent life, Manning's unconquerable
idealism assumed a mystic cast. As he pondered over what might happen
to America after his personal oblivion, he sensed that in the long
run "it is equally as impossible for the constitution to stand for
one thing in the North . . . and another in the South . . . as it
was impossible for the nation to continue, in Lincoln's time, half
slave and half free." Moreover, he anticipated an "approaching storm"
of freedom which would overwhelm the "umbrella of Southern Democratic
political or racial propaganda." Before long, Joseph predicted, "the
winds of popular political fury will blow away their bulwark of dis-
franchisement." In the land of his inner vision, which he described
in rich if mixed imagery, the people were thoroughly capable of pro-
ducing greatness and great champions of the people were sure to arise:

The clock of time will strike the hour and
again such an American leadership as [that of] Lincoln will appear. This inequality, this
Southern Democratic Party political injustice, accepted as regular through its long continuance, ... will finally be demolished.

*From Five To Twenty-Five*, the companion book to *Fadeout*, is a much more placid and charitable work. Published in July 1929, at a time when Manning had nearly vented his consciousness of hatred, it is a font of information on his youth and early convictions. In *From Five To Twenty-Five* Joseph discussed his father and mother and a host of Ashland people (though not his brothers) with wistful affection, and dwelled with obvious satisfaction on the "day when Clay County was all of the world I knew and was my only world," adding: "Its memories are now all the world to me." Clearly the sorrows of his premature old age had driven him into the refuge of waking dreams; nevertheless he carefully recorded his first protests against the demoralizing influences of crop lien agriculture, and affirmed his instinctive belief in the goodness of Alabama's people, white and black. While many of his comments on contemporary politics echoed, if humorously, the acid judgments of *Fadeout*—for instance: "We, the people, as well as the politicians are a mess. It is also time for the congregation to sing, 'Some of These Preachers Ain't Right'"—the dominant impression made by Manning in *From Five To Twenty-Five* is that of a man seeking peace and ready to extend forgiveness. "We forget the contentions and the strife of politics," he wrote simply and sincerely, "when we, in memory, approach the shrine of these old and hallowed days."42

In *From Five To Twenty-Five*, as in *Fadeout*, Manning's writing occasionally took on a prophetic tone. At one point, after complimentary references to Senator Hugo Black, a native of Ashland, Joseph
declared that

Clay County, Alabama, will yet produce the statesman . . . who will go through this old country like an earth and air contrivance in full gear, stir up the populace and set things right.43

This brief statement speaks volumes about the life Manning had wanted to live. As one of his newspaper obituaries noted, he became famous as a young reformer, and fired by zeal and ambition attempted to rise in power while adhering to strict equalitarian principles. At various times he was able to exert an influence upon men and events, but he was a failure at the game of practical politics. At every stage of his career, it seemed, there waited a Reuben Kolb, a Booker T. Washington, someone more willing to adapt to circumstances.44 Yet two of Manning's traits, courage and consistency, make it easy to pardon his foibles and shortcomings. He devoted his life to the common people of the South with a moral and physical bravery undiminished by trials which would have broken an ordinary man. The feelings which caused him to forsake the security of his family's position for the traveling existence of a Populist organizer, the deepening of democratic convictions which resulted from his contact with the biracial constituency of the People's Party--these remained the basis of his political faith. Foe of class rule, terrorism, and racism, advocate of fair elections, toleration, and racial cooperation, Manning was never comfortable in the sectionalistic, bigoted world of the early twentieth century. Still, like his Populist colleagues in the 1890's and his NAACP coworkers in the 1910's, he was
not merely working for the present. His eyes were on the future.
Footnotes to Chapter X


3. Ibid., 16-28; see also the New York Times, June 1, 2, 1909, and the Montgomery Colored Alabamian, June 19, 1909.

4. Kellogg, NAACP, 387 n. 41, the New York Survey, June 12, 1909, and the Montgomery Colored Alabamian, June 19, 1909. Milholland was the founder of the Constitution League, and an old friend of Manning's. In the early days of the NAACP, Manning was strongly identified with the Constitution League contingent of the Association.


6. The Crisis, I (November, 1910), 7, quoting an article published by Manning in "The Original Rights Magazine."

7. Sherman, Republican Party and Black America, 101-102. For information on the effort to secure a Taft statement for The Crisis, see W.E.B. Du Bois to J.C. Manning, April 13, 1912, W.E.B. Du Bois to Charles Hilles, April 13, 17, 1912, J.C. Manning to Sherman Allen, April 14, 1912, and J.C. Manning to Charles Hilles, April 14, 1912, in the William Howard Taft Papers, LC. Part of Manning's time in Washington was spent seeking a patronage job and working as an adviser and lobbyist-agent for one of his friends in the U.S. Senate, probably Crane of Massachusetts. See J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 13, 1928, in the NAACP Papers, and below.

8. See The Crisis, II (August, 1911), 150, quoting the Brockton, Massachusetts, Times; and the Montgomery Colored Alabamian, September 11, 1915.

9. J.C. Manning to W.E. Chandler, November 21, 1916, in the Chandler Papers. This letter was written at Manning's apartment on West 34th Street in New York City. By 1915-1916 he was a permanent if peripatetic resident of the Northeast, based primarily in Manhattan.


12. For evidence of Manning’s associations with the leaders of the NAACP, see William Pickens to William Howard Taft, March 13, 1911, and Bishop Alexander Walters to Charles D. Hilles, April 6, 1911, in the Taft Papers; the Montgomery Colored Alabamian, March 13, 1915, containing S.W. McCall to J.C. Manning, March 9, 1915; Butler Wilson to Thomas O. Marvin, April 29, 1922, in the Warren G. Harding Papers, Reel 208, Microfilm Edition, LC (originals in possession of the Ohio Historical Society); J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 3, 1928, January 19, 1929, and Walter White to Clarence Darrow, December 27, 1928, in the NAACP Papers.

13. Kellogg, NAACP, 114-115, 135, 210, 229, 238, 244, and J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 4, 13, 20, 1926, in the NAACP Papers. White was one of the chief NAACP spokesmen on behalf of the Dyer Anti-lynching Bill of 1921-1922; Manning was likewise involved in lobbying activities for the measure. See Sherman, Republican Party and Black America, 181-182, and below.


19. J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 15, 17, 1928, in the NAACP Papers. Crane also encouraged Manning to seek a patronage slot within the Taft administration and was his chief sponsor in the capital; see Senator W.M. Crane to Charles D. Hillies, August 19, 1911, J.C. Manning to Charles D. Hillies, November 17, 1911, and J.C. Manning to W.M. Crane, November 19, 1912, in the Taft Papers, LC. For more information on Crane, see Carolyn W. Johnson, Winthrop Murray Crane: A Study in Republican Leadership (Northampton, Massachusetts: Smith College, 1967), passim. Manning remained extremely distrustful of Theodore Roosevelt. In a letter to William E. Chandler, November 21, 1916, in the Chandler Papers, he noted that "in 1908 Roosevelt had nominated Taft with the steam roller ... In 1912, when the same Southern crowd that was employed by Roosevelt to nominate Taft in 1908 failed to do Roosevelt's bidding ... the Colonel [Roosevelt] plunged into his work of ripping the Republican Party to pieces and electing Wilson."


21. J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 4, 5, 21, 23, 1928, in the NAACP Papers. The second Klan was founded in Atlanta while "Birth of a Nation" was being shown locally. Its first leader was one W.J. Simmons, who as Manning said, had been "a Baptist preacher ... in Talladega County, Alabama." Hiram Evans, the Klan's organizational genius, did not take over until 1922. See Burner, The Politics of Provincialism, 80-83.

22. Kellogg, NAACP, 250-256, 257-266, Sherman, Republican Party and Black America, 122-124, and Manning, Fadeout, 129-130. At various times the NAACP protested to Wilson or Secretary of War Newton Baker over segregation of black troops on trains, exclusion of blacks from specialized corps, the administration's reluctance to accept black volunteers or train black officers, and Wilson's repeated failure to protect black citizens from civil disorders. The most impressive NAACP protest took the form of a massive silent parade in New York, organized in the wake of a July 1917 East St. Louis race riot in which forty-eight people were killed.


26. Sherman, Republican Party and Black America, 145-148, 174-177, 182-199, 264-266, and Donald K. McCoy, Coming of Age: The United States During the 1920's and 1930's (Hammondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1973), 81-82. Even some supporters of the Dyer Bill feared that the measure might be declared unconstitutional because it sought to operate directly upon individuals, and not through state governments as required by the precedent of the Civil Rights Cases (1883). Nonetheless the administration failed to address itself to the problem of the bill's constitutionality. Rather, Harding and his advisers chose to ignore the party commitment to anti-lynching legislation.

27. J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 14, 1928, in the NAACP Papers. Manning says that he mailed his manifesto "to all of them concerned and over the country." So far, no trace of this broadside has been found. One Republican leader who particularly disgusted Manning was Senator W.E. Borah of Idaho, who vehemently opposed the Dyer Bill on the grounds of its alleged unconstitutionality. In Fadeout, 130-131, Joseph notes sarcastically that Borah evidently could not "see that there is any violation of the Constitution by the Southern Democratic Party," a group engaged in "lynching the 15th Amendment." At the same time Manning was disenchanted because Harding and Attorney General H.M. Daugherty, both of whom had promised him a government job, had broken their word. For information on Manning's personal dealings with the Harding administration, see below.

28. Manning's changes of residence can be traced in the addresses provided in J.C. Manning to W.E. Chandler, November 21, 1916, in the Chandler Papers, and J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 3, 1928, in the NAACP Papers. At one point Manning received his mail at 40 East 22nd Street in care of Mrs. Charles H. Denison, widow of one of his long-standing Republican friends; see a clipping from the Boston Chronicle, March 25, 1922, in the "Case of Joseph C. Manning" file, Harding Papers. On March 5, 1977, the author interviewed Gladys Manning (Mrs. Robert Stone Weatherly) of Birmingham, and secured from her copies of two letters, Gladys Manning to Mrs. M.N. Manning, January 26, February 8, 1920. In these letters she relates how Manning took her to dinner and a movie and insisted on buying her a hat (he was then enjoying his GOP "publicity" expense account). She noted too that Denison "has a very bright analytical mind," but observes with relief that her cousin "has not raved about his family so much at late. He is certainly 'off' on that subject." Apparently, Denison was named for the C.H. Denison mentioned above; yet almost nothing is known concerning Manning's relationship with the Denison family. The hints concerning Manning's marital unhappiness were obtained in an interview with Mrs. J.O. Lindsey, January 6, 1978. Mrs. Lindsey, wife of Zoe Manning's first cousin, recalls hearing older relatives say many times that Joe "wasn't treating her [Zoe] right."
The number of the Mannings' children can be ascertained through the Tallapoosa County Birthdate File (1897-1908), Tallapoosa County Probate Office. For Zoe's residence and for the names of her surviving children see her obituary in the Birmingham News, January 16, 1956. Zoe lived to be eighty-four years old; her husband's name is not even mentioned in the obituary.

29. J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 5, 1928, in the NAACP Papers. Presumably the son was Joseph C. Manning, Jr., one of the Manning children listed in Zoe Manning's obituary. Manning never disclosed the name of his Klansman brother.

30. J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 13, 14, 1928, in the NAACP Papers.

31. For a time, Manning maintained his voter's registration in Alabama in the rather deluded hope that his friends—notably Senators W.M. Crane and Joseph F. Johnston—might secure him an appointment as Postmaster of Birmingham. He was encouraged to seek this position, moreover, by W.E.B. Du Bois and John Milholland, neither of whom stood in the Taft administration's good graces. See J.C. Manning to Charles D. Hilles, August 11, November 13, 17, 1911, and W.M. Crane to Charles D. Hilles, August 19, September 8, 1911, in the Taft Papers. In 1920-1921 Manning told both Harding and Thomas O. Marvin, a Bostonian who chaired the U.S. Tariff Commission, that he wanted to be appointed minister or consul to one of the Latin American Republics. Such a post, he explained, would add dignity to his name, allow him to stabilize his finances, and ultimately, continue his work with renewed efficiency. For the sorry story of Manning's dealings with the Harding administration, see the letters in the "Case of Joseph C. Manning" file, Harding Papers, and J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 13, 14, 1928, in the NAACP Papers.

32. J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 13, 14, 15, 1928, in the NAACP Papers. In a letter to a dying W.E. Chandler, December 17, 1916, in the Chandler Papers, Manning declares emotionally: "To know you has been a blessing to my life."

33. J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 3, 14, 23, 1928, January 19, April 24, 1929, in the NAACP Papers.

34. Walter White to Dr. and Mrs. Ernest Alexander, December 6, 1928, Walter White to Clarence Darrow, December 27, 1928, and Arthur J. Cary to Walter White, April 17, 1930, in the NAACP Papers. See also the New York Amsterdam News, May 21, 1930, clipping in the Joseph C. Manning Folder, Vertical File, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.
35. Manning's obituaries, on file at the Schomburg Center, are from the New York Amsterdam News, May 21, 1930, and the Chicago Defender, May 24, 31, 1930. For other favorable comments upon Manning and his life's work, see an editorial, "Lest We Forget," from the New York News, December 17, 1927, reprinted in Fadeout, 145-147. The silence of The Crisis is inexplicable, unless it is possible that some resentment still lingered over a 1919 article Manning had published in the Washington, D.C., Bee, denouncing "Bolshevism" in the NAACP. See Kellogg, NAACP, 287 n. 41, 290.

36. J.C. Manning to Walter White, December 14, 1928, in the NAACP Papers. Manning's publisher for both Fadeout and From Five To Twenty-Five was T.A. Hebbons and Company of New York City, presumably a black firm.

37. Manning, Fadeout, 53-54. In an interesting sidelight to his discussion of Populism, Manning discussed the twentieth-century career of his old mentor Tom Watson of Georgia, who had become a Democratic boss, disfranchiser, race-baiter, and in 1920 a U.S. Senator. In ibid., 19-20, Manning sketched the history of Watson's frustrations in the 1890's at the hands of the Bourbons, and noted: "Watson had, in it all, come to realize the hopelessness [sic] of the people of the South to throw off the yoke of Democratic Party domination . . . and he observed the indifference of the nation to this condition. His idealism vanished, Embittered at first, he undoubtedly wondered what could be done. In the years to follow . . . he took the only step open to him toward a seat in the Senate. He took the usual Democratic Party method necessary to political success in Georgia." See also Woodward, Tom Watson, 370-395, 475-486.

38. Manning, Fadeout, 43, 45.

39. Ibid., 64, 91-92, 99-100, 106-107, 122.

40. Ibid., 68, 70, 91. To Manning, the very principles of democracy and equality of opportunity were forces "which must, in the end, bring this issue [disfranchisement] to solution." He looked forward to the day when an inspired leader or great need would "give public sentiment, the popular will, the spirit of democracy the opportunity of real national expression."

41. Manning, From Five To Twenty-Five, 62, 67, 84. For publication information, see the review of From Five To Twenty-Five, clipped from the New York Amsterdam News, July 29, 1929, in the Joseph C. Manning Folder, Schomburg Center.

42. Manning, From Five To Twenty-Five, 77-78, 84.

43. Ibid., 79, 82, 84.
Location of Clay County and Lauderdale County.
Map #2

Counties in which Populist Activities were reported in 1891.
Map #3

Counties involved in April Populism, 1892.
Map #4

Counties Represented on the Populist Executive Committee, May 1892.
Populist Gains by September 1892.

- Populist Activity Strengthened or Visible for the First Time
- Jeffersonian Party Absorbed by People’s Party
Weaver's Alabama Vote, November 1892.

- Counties Carried by Weaver
- Counties Lost by 250 or Fewer Votes
Map #7

Kolb Counties Which Voted for Cleveland in 1892.

- Counties Carried by 300 to 1400 Votes
- Counties Carried by 250 or Fewer Votes
One of Joseph Manning's Campaigns of Education, 1893-1894.
Further Campaigns of Education, Spring 1894:
Counties Visited by Joseph Manning From April 20 to May 9, 1894.
Map #11

Geographic Distribution of Anti-Democratic Legislators, 1894-1895.

- Represented in the House of Representatives
- Represented in the Senate
Map #12

Oates' Margin of Victory in 1894: Predominantly Black Counties which Voted Democratic.
Manuscript Collections

Of the several Library of Congress collections containing letters to or from Joseph C. Manning, two are especially noteworthy. The Manning and related Alabama items in the William Edward Chandler Papers stretch over the period from 1894 to 1916, and include patronage, strategic, statistical, and personal information. Chandler, for many years a Senator from New Hampshire, was an imposing figure. Yet Manning's relationship to Chandler gradually changed from one of supplication to one of intellectual camaraderie. The Manning letters in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Papers, especially Manning's December 1928, correspondence with Walter White, are a striking "deathbed" profession of faith.

The several Manning letters contained in the Henry Demarest Lloyd Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, provide a number of frank, introspective comments on Manning's New York tour in March-April 1895.

The Alabama Department of Archives and History possesses few Manning letters or documents. One brief letter from Manning is on file in the Chappell Cory Papers, Manuscripts Division. Two Manning items are stored in the Civil Archives Division, in Box 203, Official Governors' Papers (administration of Emmett O'Neal, 1911-1915).

Three collections on file in the Manuscripts Division, Alabama
Department of Archives and History, are of great interest to any student of late nineteenth-century Alabama History: the John Wither-spoon Du Bose Papers, Robert McKee Papers, and Joseph Wheeler Papers. Each of these very different men was an habitual and voluminous letter-writer, and each knew well the notable Alabamians of the 1880's and 1890's. There is no Manning correspondence in these collections, but numerous letters to and from A.T. Goodwyn, Reuben Kolb, W.H. Skaggs, and W.S. Reese help form a workable picture of the times.

Newspapers

Few copies exist of the two newspapers edited by Joseph C. Manning. Three copies of the Birmingham Alabama Reformer, 1892, are stored in the Archives Division of the Birmingham Public Library. One copy of the Alexander City Southern American, 1909, is stored in the Civil Archives Division of the Alabama Department of Archives and History, in Montgomery. Fortunately, two newspapers intimately connected with Manning's career are on file at the Clay County Courthouse in Ashland. The Ashland People's Party Advocate, 1894-1898, 1900, is an invaluable day-to-day source of information on Manning's travels and political strategy. C.F. Dodson, editor in 1894-1895, was both a member of W.S. Morgan's radical Reform Press Association and a firm supporter of Manning's "Congressional Strategy." The Ashland Clay County Advance, 1891-1894, edited by Michael N. Manning, is excellent for Manning family history, and for Michael Manning's intransigent, insensitive Bourbon editorials. The availability of these Clay County newspapers may be limited for some time, as they are currently (summer, 1979) in
the process of being microfilmed by the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

Two important newspapers are on file in the Tallapoosa County Courthouse in Dadeville. The Dadeville Tallapoosa New Era, 1892-1898, followed Manning's career and the course of central Alabama politics from alternately Silver Democratic and Populist viewpoints. In 1895-1896, the New Era was under the influence of a Manning ally, Populist Jere Dennis, an advocate of biracial class unity. The Alexander City Outlook, founded in 1892 and still publishing, contains detailed information on Manning's Tallapoosa County years, 1897-1909. Editor Fitz O. Hooten, an eccentric bachelor and Silver Democrat, gave Republican Manning respectful, often friendly attention.

Of the dozens of late nineteenth-century newspapers on file at the Civil Archives Division, Alabama Department of Archives and History, three are worthy of special mention. The Butler Choctaw Alliance, 1894, 1896, and the Ozark Banner-Advertiser, 1895-1896, both Middle-of-the-Road Populist journals, are vital for the information they contain on the Fusion-Cooperation controversy of 1895-1896. The Montgomery Advertiser, edited by William W. Screws and known as the "Old Grandma" of Alabama newspapers, provides a comprehensive Bourbon view of the 1890's. An early twentieth-century black newspaper, the Montgomery Colored Alabamian, 1907-1916, furnishes numerous glimpses of Manning as a voluntarily exiled civil rights crusader. Edited by Rev. R.C. Judkins, Manning's personal friend and political ally, the Colored Alabamian is a mirror of black strivings and determination in disfranchisement-era Alabama.
Local Sources

The dimly-lit offices of the United Methodist Churches in Ashland and Alexander City hold a variety of membership rolls, treasurers' records, and Sunday School reports which touch upon the religious life of Joseph C. Manning and his relatives. The records in Ashland date from the 1880's, and contain materials sufficient for religious biographies of Henry A. Manning and Michael N. Manning, both of whom were dedicated lay ministers and church conventioners.

The United States Post Office in Alexander City has on file several "Window Registration Books" from the early twentieth century. Several of these books, which list the senders and receivers of most first-class and all registered mail leaving Alexander City, were kept by Manning. Unfortunately, the Window Registers have survived only by accident; postal regulations evidently do not require preservation of such outdated local records. Postal workers in Alexander City assured the author that visiting inspectors regularly appropriated the books as curiosities.

Many of the older citizens of Clay and Tallapoosa Counties vividly remember the Henry A. Manning family. A few survivors of the early twentieth century retain particularly useful memories of Joseph Manning. Judge C.J. Coley, Alexander City, age 77, Mrs. J.O. Lindsey, Alexander City, age 86, Mr. R.Y. Scott, Alexander City, recently deceased at age 81, and Judge J.B. Tolland, Ashland, age 72, gave freely of their considerable knowledge of local history and of Manning's personality. Mrs. Robert Stone Weatherly, Birmingham, age 82, Manning's niece, provided a unique insight into the Manning family, and unearthed two price-
less letters relevant to "Uncle Joe" written in New York City in 1920, a time when Gladys Manning—the future Mrs. Weatherly—was in town as an aspiring art and drama student.

Books

Two general works have directly influenced this study. Lawrence Goodwyn, in Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America (1978), brilliantly details the rise and decline of an ideological People's Party movement in the West and Southeast. Goodwyn forces his readers to grasp the Populists' world-view from a contemporary grass-roots level; likewise he provides specific information as to why some Third Party organizations succeeded for a time, and why others failed from the beginning. J. Morgan Kousser, in The Shaping of Southern Politics: Suffrage Restriction and the Establishment of the One-Party South, 1880-1910 (1974), demonstrates conclusively that the so-called disfranchisement movement of the late 1890's and 1900's was really the conclusion of a long Democratic consolidation of power. To a large extent, therefore, The Shaping of Southern Politics refutes the theory, advanced in C. Vann Woodward's Origins of the New South (1951) and The Strange Career of Jim Crow (1955, 1966, 1974), that ex-Populists were a leading force in depriving Southern Negroes of the vote.

Every student of Alabama agrarianism must deal with Sheldon Hackney's Populism to Progressivism in Alabama (1969). Utilizing sociological terminology, Hackney maintains that Third Party activity helped prepare the ground for Progressive reforms. Unfortunately, like other historians who have sounded this traditional theme, he approaches his subject almost exclusively from the point of view of the Democracy.
His chief materials are the files of the Montgomery Advertiser and the Mobile Register. Thomas M. Owen's four-volume History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography (1921), the John Witherspoon Du Bose Papers and Robert McKee Papers, and the legislative journals of the 1894-1895 session: all Democratic sources. Not surprisingly, the Populists of Populism to Progressivism are unbalanced bumpkins—no match for the masterful Bourbon and Progressive Democratic leaders of the time.

William Warren Rogers' One-Called Rebellion: Agrarianism in Alabama, 1865-1896 (1970) is a more reliable book. Rogers views the agrarians as men and women fighting for personal freedom and social justice, and he respects their valiant losing effort. Furthermore, the scholarship behind One-Called Rebellion is first-rate. Rogers' familiarity with dozens of county newspapers, Populist and Democratic, is apparent on every page. Rogers' willingness to gloss over the ideological and tactical distance which separated Populists and Jeffersonians (a difficulty he shares with Hackney) is natural in such a broad-gauged study. In the totality of its impact, One-Called Rebellion is destined to be an enduring work.
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THESIS AND DISSERTATIONS


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