

The Commoner.

Whether Common or Not.



A Word With Triggs.

Triggs may be right—the old church songs
May be mere hackneyed rhymes;
It may be that they all belong
To less progressive times.
Their literary style and form
May not suit such as he;
But "Refuge" from life's weary storm
Is good enough for me.
"Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the billows near me roll, while the tempest
still is high."

Triggs may be right—the songs of old
May err in every verse;
Their faults may be as Triggs has told,
And range from bad to worse.
But though not one in all the book
May be from error free,
Still to the pages old I look
And sing of "Bethany."
"Nearer, my God, to Thee; nearer to Thee.
E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me."

Triggs may be right—I'll not deny
He's up in literature.
They may not reach his standard high,
And therefore not endure.
But, just the same, those songs will live
And cheer the world until
Professor Triggs to us can give
A song like "Ortonville."
"Majestic sweetness sits enthroned upon the Sav-
iour's brow;
His head with radiant glories crowned, His lips
with grace o'erflow."

Triggs may be right—yes, let him mock
The grand old hymns of praise.
Yet still we'll sing old "Antioch"
Through all our livelong days.
Those dear old songs we will not slight,
But sing them with a vim
Until Professor Triggs shall write
A song like "Pleyel's Hymn."
"Lord of Hosts to Thee we raise here a house of
prayer and praise.
Thou Thy people's hearts prepare, here to meet for
praise and prayer."

Speculative.

"I have here a beautiful bit of verse on 'The
Death of Summer,'" began the poet, drawing nigh
to the city editor's desk. "It breathes the balmy
air of the cooling days and sings of the beautiful
tinges that Dame Nature is painting upon the—"
"Another gusher," growled the city editor.
"Hi, there, boy! Show the gentleman over to the
oil market editor."

Our Wonderful Language.

There was a young man in St. Croix
Who thought himself quite a gay boix.
He was thrust into goal
For rushing the paol,
And nothing his grief can alloix.

Cautious

The great warrior hesitated to give the word
that would precipitate the battle.
"What shall it profit me to win the fight if
some \$2.48-a-day historian is to write it up?" he
asked of himself.

But, of course, caution is always commendable.

Uncle Eben.

"I've jus' been thinkin'," remarked Uncle Eben
as he tilted his chair back against the cracker
barrel, "that th' tariff on wool has been a failure.
It seems that it ain't raised enough of a crop to
warrant another attempt at pullin' it over th' eyes
o' th' people."

Ample Apology.

"Look here, Weatherly, did you tell Miss Got-
rox that I was a hare-brained fellow?"
"No, sir; I did not. I only told her you car-
ried a mighty good start for a Belgian rabbitry
under your hat."

"O, that's all right. But I don't stand for no
backcapping, Weatherly. Just remember that."

In Old Madrid.

First Spanish Grandee—"What's all this fuss
in American naval circles about?"

Second Spanish Grandee—"I don't know; but
it would seem to indicate that we were deluded
into believing that we were to accept terms of
peace instead of dictating them."

His Limitations.

Mr. Morgan is quite wealthy
But we rather doubt if he's
Got a stomach that is able
To digest sauer-kraut and cheese.

Explained.

"Why do pawnbrokers use three balls as a
sign of their business?"
"Because it's two to one you don't get your
stuff back."

Beneficial.

"Did Dr. Boltem's Elixir of Pigweed help you
any?"
"Did it? Well I should say it did. I got \$50
for writing a testimonial and paid the last in-
stallment on my automobile with the money. I
should say it did help me!"

Worried.

Old Neptune called a council of his wise mer-
men.
"What is it, O King?" queried the chief of the
sages.
"I want you fellows to scheme up some way of
raising revenue," said Neptune, reflectively scratch-
ing his back with his trident.
"Why this concern for income, sire?"
"Haven't you read the papers? These artful
humans are making ships so speedy that ocean
travellers will be carried across before they have
time to pay me tribute."
Naturally the tax dodgers will carry it to the
limit. —W. M. M.

A Warning From Chandler.

The following is an extract from an article
by ex-Senator William E. Chandler, of New
Hampshire, in the Independent:

"A corporation charter authorizing \$350,000,000
of bonds, \$500,000,000 of preferred stock and \$500,-
000,000 of common stock, all for the purpose of
creating a monopoly in the iron and steel manu-
factures of the United States, should be repealed
by the legislature of the state which created it,
and the republican voters of the state should elect
a republican legislature pledged to such repeal.

"That such a gigantic monopoly should be
created or allowed by any state is a grievous wrong
done to 76,000,000 of people. All gain through
the economy of production on a large scale is
more than overcome by the evil of giving power to
the monopolies to fix any price of the product to
the customer which they choose to exact, and any
rate of wages to their workmen which they choose
to force upon their helpless victims. The in-
creased profits will only go to swell the enormous
fortunes of the multi-millionaires, whose enormous
wealth already enables them to organize a \$1,350,-
000,000 monopoly.

"Only one such overgrown monopoly has been
hitherto tried in this country—namely, the joint
traffic association, consisting of the nine lines of
railroads between New York and Chicago, owned
by thirty corporations, with a capital of \$2,500,-
000,000 and a gross income of \$300,000,000. Prac-
tically this association dominated all the railroads
of the country, with a capital of \$11,000,000,000,
an income of \$1,200,000,000 and a force of employes
numbering 900,000.

"This railroad joint traffic association was
nominally dissolved after a decision of the United
States supreme court (made by five judges against
four) that it was illegal under the United States
anti-monopoly act of 1890. But the railroads en-
deavored to force the passage of a law of congress
authorizing all the railroads of the country to
pool their earnings substantially as was done by
the railroads in the joint traffic association. In
1895 such a bill passed the house, but failed to
come to a vote on the merits in the senate and did
not become a law. Two principal amendments
were offered in the senate, one providing that, un-
der pooling with competition abolished, there
should be no raising of fares and freights except
with the approval of the interstate commerce com-
mission, and the second a provision for the com-
pulsory arbitration of the rates of wages of the
railroad employes under the arbitration law of
congress of October 1, 1888.

"But both these amendments were voted down
in the senate committee through railroad influ-
ence; and, although the bill has never become a
law, yet an illegal combination of the railroads to
maintain rates continues to exist; the leading rail-
road companies formerly in competition are com-
ing under the same ownership; all railroad com-
petition is abolished, and the charges to passen-

gers and shippers and the wages of the railroad
employes are fixed by the arbitrary and uncon-
trolled power of a few enormously wealthy owners
and managers.

Such is the railroad combination of not less
than \$3,000,000,000, and practically of \$11,000,000,-
000. Now it is supplemented and fortified by an
alliance with a steel corporation of \$1,350,000,000.
The people have stood so far almost paralyzed in
the face of such enormous masses of money con-
centrated in two absolutely monopolized indus-
tries, with others quite as objectionable, but of less
magnitude co-operating to suppress competition,
maintain prices of products and keep down the
wages of labor.

"But the voters are beginning to wake up; not
yet the consumers of iron and steel, but the work-
men in the iron and steel factories. Necessarily
such a huge combination as the steel corporation,
employing thousands of laborers, will cause the
formation of a huge labor organization. The power
of the producers of any of the great staple com-
modities constituting the necessities of human life
at the present day to fix the prices for the consum-
ers and the wages for their workmen without com-
petition will not be tolerated. Bargains of all
kinds should be mutual. There is no mutuality
where the consumer can buy of only one producer,
and where the workman has only one employer,
through whom he can earn the daily bread for
himself and his family.

"So we are to have gigantic struggles between
vast aggregations of capital and vast bodies of or-
ganized laborers. The last are inevitable if the
first exist; and are legitimate and justifiable. If
all the manufacturers of iron and steel can com-
bine, then all the laborers skilled only in that kind
of work have the right to unite in one labor or-
ganization and agree that no one will work unless
the wages for all are fixed by the organization and
assented to by the manufacturers. Neither em-
ployers nor laborers have a right to resort to il-
legal or unfair means; to violence of any sort.
But we all know the tendency.

"In 1895 Mr. Carnegie's employes struck, he
ran away to Europe, riots took place, Mr. Frick
was shot and others killed, the whole national
guard of Pennsylvania was called to arms; and in
consequence of this controversy Mr. Cleveland was
elected president instead of Mr. Harrison.

"Further disturbances of this kind are sure
to follow persistency in the attempts to annihilate
the rule of competition in business, which has
governed production and commerce since the dawn
of civilization, and thus to revolutionize human af-
fairs without any provision for keeping down the
prices of commodities to the consumers and keep-
ing up the rates of wages for the laborers. The
ancient and natural law of the business world,
which has protected consumers and laborers, is to
be abolished in favor of the capitalists; and no
method is to be provided by which the latter are
to be kept back from raising prices and lowering
wages at their pleasure.

"Wild words are not wise; but it may be use-
fully said that there should be a fearful looking
forward to judgment on the part of the men who
are doing these things.

"What is the remedy for the threatening evils?
It is easy and sure—the exercise of legislative con-
trol over corporation organizations. No abolition
of competition in any business can take place
through agreements of individuals or partner-
ships of individuals alone. Corporate powers are
indispensable. Bonds and stock must be issued
and thrust upon the market. But the legislatures
can decide what shall be the quantities of bonds
and stocks, and can limit the business which each
corporation may do. Congress can absolutely con-
trol the interstate commerce railroads. The state
legislatures can also govern them and all other
corporation monopolies and force them back to
the ancient ways. The people have the remedy in
their own hands; and if the suffrage is not over-
come by corruption, fraud or violence success will
attend the coming counter movement against the
twentieth century attempt to revolutionize the
laws of production and commerce by organizing
huge combinations of wealth in the form of cor-
porations, by abolishing competition, by oppress-
ing consumers and laborers, by making the rich
enormously richer while the poor stand still in
their poverty, and, above all, by arousing the many
poor voters in our republic into a dangerous cru-
sade against the comparatively few rich voters,
which will endanger the stability of the republic
itself.

"This is the new work for the republican
party, worthy of its reputation. It has abolished
slavery, given to every settler a farm on our public
lands, established manhood suffrage throughout
the nation, saved the union in civil war, liberated
two races in Cuba and the Orient, and it will con-
tinue to be the party of the people and not degen-
erate into a mere enslaved organization owned
by the money power of America and Europe."