

THE PLACE TO DO THE MOST EFFECTIVE WORK

In its issue of March 17, The Commoner announced the Primary Pledge plan of organization. The letters so far received have been more than gratifying, and it must be plain to everyone who has read the extracts from letters received at The Commoner office, that in all sections of the country democrats are enthusiastic in their determination that their party shall so shape its policies as to be of practical service to the people. The Primary Pledge plan is not to be the work of a week or of a month. It is to be the work of years and it will require considerable time in which to cover the entire field. But if every reader of The Commoner will co-operate in this work and will call upon his democratic neighbors to work with him, the field will be covered and the great work will be accomplished.

This plan does not involve the writing of a platform in advance of the primaries; it does not rest upon the paramount importance of any one issue. It recognizes the right of the democratic voters to control the policy of the democratic party, and to determine its position upon public questions. It also recognizes the importance of honesty and sincerity in politics.

Every democrat is asked to pledge himself to attend all of the primaries of his party to be held between now and the next democratic national convention, unless unavoidably prevented and to use his influence to secure a clear, honest and straight-forward declaration of the party's position on every question upon which the voters of the party desire to speak. Those desiring to be enrolled can either write to The Commoner approving the object of the organization and asking to have their names entered on the roll, or they can fill out and mail the blank pledge which is printed on page 14 of this issue. Newspapers approving the plan outlined, are requested to reproduce the primary pledge calling upon their readers to sign and return the same.

Judge Charles J. Fisk, district judge at Grand Forks, N. D., writing under date of April 28, says: "My name is signed to the enclosed primary pledge and I desire to say that I am in hearty sympathy with the movement; and the general sentiment among the democrats in this vicinity is the same. It goes without saying that the place to do effective work in the interest of the rights of the people is at the primaries. This was the plan we pursued in North Dakota in the summer of 1896 and the result was a practically unanimous sentiment in our county and state conventions and the so-called 'Cleveland sound-money democrats' remained at home or were mere spectators at our conventions. I am glad at all times to do what little I can to assist in the great work you and The Commoner are doing in the interest of the common people and good government."

Edward O. Sharpe, Evangelist of Christian church, writing under date of Carlinville, Ill., May 6, says: "Find herein my pledge to attend primaries and fight for the preservation of genuine democracy. It was an undoubted inspiration on your part to plan this method of securing a revival of interest in the rank and file of the democratic party in behalf of righteous popular government. I wish to be considered in line and ready for any active duty that will promote the welfare of the party and the people. For you, Mr. Bryan, my heartfelt prayers go up daily to God that you may be spared to see the triumph of the patriotic principles for which you have so bravely battled. In firm faith of ultimate victory, I remain yours in full fellowship."

A. B. Callaway of Seymour, Mo., is not yet a voter, being only eighteen years of age, but Mr. Callaway writes to say that he feels it to be his duty as a democrat to help further the Primary Pledge plan. He encloses a number of pledges signed and asks that one hundred blank pledges be forwarded to him. He says: "I believe it obligatory upon every democrat in the land to help make this great movement a success. We must have a better organization and yours is the best plan to secure a good one. The party must fight its battle upon honest issues and must always stand by the people."

This young man has set a good example to older democrats. He will be of great service in this plan of organization and who may doubt that when he reaches his majority, the vote of the man will be cast in accordance with the training of the lad.

It would be well if every other young man in

IN THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE IS AT THE PRIMARIES

this country could imitate the good example set by young Callaway.

Extracts from other letters, everyone enclosing primary pledges, follow:

Allan Kennedy, Ft. Smith, Ark.—Enclosed please find my pledge. It is one I shall keep, for I realize the necessity there is for such action by the real democrats of the country. The party needs rescuing from influences in Arkansas which are as bad, if not worse, than the plutocratic influences of the monied wing of the party.

Chas. B. Bechtol, Coshocton, O.—It is with pleasure that I send the pledge, signed. I heartily approve of your good work, and stand ready to do what I can to help the movement along. I am committeeman in my township and am willing to trust the rank and file. I believe the great majority of democrats favor the reforms you advocate in The Commoner.

John A. Dodds, Sandoval, Ill.—It is with pleasure I sign this pledge. I think this is a splendid way to arouse and encourage the part of Democracy that should control the party, and I feel that this move on your part with the help of the common people, will head off another farce convention such as we had in 1904. There are yet plenty of good democrats in this country, but they want sincere leaders and sound principles to work for.

Samuel Holmes, Missouri Valley, Ia.—Enclosed please find primary pledge. The plan is a good one. "Back to the people!"

Dr. D. H. Patton, Woodward, Okla.—Enclosed I send primary pledge signed up by good loyal democrats. The pledge is no new obligation for any of them, as they are all workers and in line with the policies advocated by The Commoner. I don't think there is a democrat in the country who would refuse to sign it if an opportunity were offered.

A. E. Chamness, Indianola, Ind.—I am very glad to sign this pledge and to be enrolled in the list.

H. W. Lewis, Creston, Ill.—Herewith primary pledge I am a democrat and believe in the honest and just rule of the people.

F. Runde, Chicago.—Enclosed please find the primary pledge, signed. I hope it will do great good for the next convention to have a united party and a platform that will be democratic. I am one of the 1896 independent democrats, and still believe in the Chicago platform. I think we can win in 1908 if the primary laws are taken out of the politicians' hands and left to the public to nominate their own men for conventions from each district.

I. N. McClintock, Horton, Kans.—I want to be enrolled among the old guard of fighting democrats, and promise you and all the readers of the grand old Commoner that I will continue to attend all the democratic primaries and help name a ticket and write a platform, and then with good democrats take off my coat and help elect it from top to bottom.

S. V. O'Hare, attorney, Muskogee, I. T.—Enclosed please find primary pledge, from last issue of The Commoner. Before locating in Indian Territory, I supported with all the energy I had in Iowa for ten years, the principles advocated by Mr. Bryan and his brand of Democracy, and while as yet we have no vote in national elections here, we will long before the time to elect the next president comes 'round.

Dr. W. B. Mead, Lawton, Okla.—I herewith enclose my primary pledge. Let the democrats take the advance step toward placing the people in control of the government they are taxed to support. Let us in convention assembled say what we mean and mean what we say. Discard expediency and fear, and declare boldly for the right.

C. L. Chaffee, Lyndonville, N. Y.—Enclosed find signed primary pledge, of which I heartily approve.

Henry C. Luttrell, Myrtle Point, Oregon—You may enter my name on your primary pledge. I am in favor of democratic organization and always attend all the primaries of my party.

W. A. Hodges, Salt Lake City, Utah.—Enclosed with this are two primary pledges, one signed by myself, the other by my daughter. We heartily endorse your plan for securing to the plain people of the democratic party the control of its policy, which properly belongs to them. It has been well said that there is not room for two republican parties in this country, therefore

in the contest which is now on between the masses and the classes, between the people and plutocracy, the democratic party must stand for the rights of the people against the forces of organized greed, for the commonwealth against the privileged monopoly, or, failing in this, give place to the new party which must surely come if the quasi republicanism which controlled our last national convention should dominate the next one.

Z. W. Shrader, Nehawka, Neb.—I will be at every primary and on election day will work for my party.

John Flaherty, So. McAlester, Ind. Ter.—Enclosed is a pledge from a democrat who never gives in to defeat, and one who believes in fighting for the democratic principles, even though we lose or win.

John Argus, Hammondsport, N. Y.—I want to do my share in this work so here find my pledge enclosed. With pleasure I join hands with the great common people through the columns of The Commoner in helping to marshal together the laboring men of the nation.

M. M. Murray of Yellow Springs, Ohio.—Your plan has my most hearty endorsement, and I will do my part to carry it out.

W. J. Ledbetter, Shawnee, Miss.—Earnest wishes for the success of pure and undefiled democracy.

C. C. Lemen, Martinsburg, W. Va.—I take great pleasure in signing.

A. F. Johnson, Paris, Texas.—I think this primary pledge will be the making of the democratic party in the future.

J. N. Barton, Loomis, Cal.—Find pledge to do just what I have been doing since my majority. I am now 75 years of age and during all these long years of service, I have been a determined democrat.

D. A. Roach, Indianapolis, Ind.—This form of organization is certainly commendable. If the democratic masses will adopt and carry out this idea, we will soon get back to primitive principles.

C. C. Foemwalt, Dexter, N. M.—Am in hopes it will be signed by every democrat in the United States. Will do all I can to get others to sign it.

Wm. F. Stacy, Callao, Mo.—Herewith I enclose you primary pledge with 110 names. Please send me more blanks to distribute through the different townships and will try and organize this county along this line.

A. V. Howard, Sibley, Mont.—I wish to be enrolled.

Edward Casey, Sr., Sleepy Eye, Minn.—I think it a good plan and hope it will bring all those in favor of good government together irrespective of party. Will do what I can to induce others to sign the pledge.

T. J. Bevins, Canada, Pike county, Ky.—I hope every one that signs the pledge will act accordingly as it will build up the democratic party on old-time Jeffersonian principles.

D. M. Elkins, Caps, Ala.—It is my intention to attend the primaries and work with renewed energy for the principles as enunciated in 1896 and 1900. I have read every issue of The Commoner printed so far and have stood with it in everything save voting for Parker. I simply did not vote in that election.

S. A. Hayward, Hayward, Okla.—I think the Primary Pledge will be a great instrument in leading to success in the next election. I am glad to have an opportunity of signing this pledge.

K. D. Moen, Mound City, Mo.—I think the plan a good one.

J. W. Oakes, Elk City, Kan.—I wish to endorse everything that is democratic. I hope every democrat will fall in line and keep up the fight until 1908.

L. P. Baum, Fenturs, Va.—Inasmuch as a great many democrats do not get The Commoner with the form of the primary pledge in it, it seems to me, it would be well to send a dozen blanks to every county and ask democrats to sign and return the same.

D. N. Cobbs, Hutton Valley, Mo.—I would like my name enrolled.

Nelson Dudymott, Arvada, Jefferson Co., Calif.—I think the primary pledge is the thing. I am a farmer 63 years of age. Have been a democrat all my life. I fought for Mr. Bryan in 1896 and I am still fighting. I do not want any more goldbug democracy; it is poison. I am a double standard democrat, 1873 is what started our downfall.