

## Editorials By Commoner Readers

### IS IT A USELESS STRUGGLE?

Wanatah, Ind.—I have been a reader of The Commoner ever since the first year of its publication, also have the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh volumes of The Commoner Condensed in my library and I find them a valuable set of reference books. I have supported Mr. Bryan during three campaigns and have fought for the principles advocated by Mr. Bryan, fully appreciated the difference between the two sets of principles set forth in the platforms adopted at the national conventions by the two strong parties and believed that, if Mr. Bryan could be made president of the United States, he would be able to accomplish the reforms which he advocated and which are necessary for the betterment of conditions for the common people of our country. But the actions of the last session of congress has changed my mind, and I have come to the conclusion that it is not within the reach of any man or political party under the present system of government to accomplish any great good for the common people. I have just completed reading an article in The Commoner of August 13, volume 9, number 31 entitled "The 'Tariff Revision' Fraud," and from the substance of this article I am inclined to think that if The Commoner's opinion was fully expressed it would harmonize quite well with the gist of my thought. In this article you say: "Tariff revision by 'the friends of the tariff' is an exploded theory. It can not be used to fool the people any more." If the people have become wise enough to realize that they have not been represented in congress but have been misrepresented, I want to ask what means they have at their command to rectify this evil? You also say: "The consumer now knows that his interest will not be considered until he makes his vote mean what he wants." But what right has the voter to believe that he is in a position to make his vote count for what he wants? Among the intelligent voters it has been well understood that there are special privilege characters who have received their special privileges as a result of the vote of the representatives of the majority of the voters. The initiative and referendum, the right of recall and the election of United States senators by popular vote has been suggested as a remedy for these abuses, but I am unable to see how this can be accomplished since a resolution in favor of the election of United States senators by popular vote has passed a republican house several times, but in each case has been killed by the senate. There is a reason for such action and the reason is simply self interest. The senate being filled with men who are enjoying the special privileges is no more liable to allow laws to pass in the future which would be against their own selfishness and in the interest of the common people than it has been in the past. Show me a reason why the most staunch of our democrats in the senate should turn traitor at a most critical moment and I will show you the same excuse for doing the same in the future. I think I fully realize that unless something is done to mend the present evils, conditions will continue to grow worse and how to mend these evils is the question which I am interested in. The plan proposed by the democratic party, as I understand it, is a plan which has been advocated by the said party for a good many years and a plan under which the present evils have grown to a great magnitude, and with no promise of coming to an end and in searching for a solution I have come to the conclusion that we can only find it in a co-operative commonwealth. S. D. BAILEY.

### TAKING CARE OF CAESAR

Findlay, Ohio.—Your "Story in Point" in yesterday's issue respecting the "St. Louis Business Caesar," brings to my mind that when Judge Taft was first mentioned as a presidential possibility a prominent democratic Standard Oil trust lawyer regaled me at great length on the eminent safety and sanity of Taft, between the paroxysms of his democratic wrath against the exclamations of Theodore Roosevelt, assuring all hearers and all comers that Mr. Taft would give us a sane, business administration eminently satisfactory to the business interests. This same eminent democratic lawyer for the trusts is the president of the Middle Bass Fishing club which used to entertain the late Ex-President Cleveland, and who put Taft and Foraker in the same bed at the Toledo encamp-

ment, and arranged the preliminaries whereby Foraker was to preside at Taft's love feast then scheduled for his home city of Cincinnati, but which Roosevelt vetoed by reason of the Hearst expose of the Archbold (Standard) letters to Foraker.

After Roosevelt and the federal officeholders had accomplished the nomination of Taft, and in order to secure material for the democratic campaign, I wrote to this same prominent democratic trust lawyer, reminding him of his recommendation of his friend, Judge Taft, as so eminently satisfactory to the interests and so different in temperament from his predecessor, stating to him the obvious fact that either Taft was deceiving the interests, or the president who had prostituted his high office to secure his nomination, and appealing to him to tell me (as I knew he could) which one of these two Taft was fooling, and I furnished a copy of this letter to the president at least three weeks before election. I did not send him the answer of the democratic lawyer, as it never reached me.

Events will prove, if they have not already proven, that the system will "Take care of Caesar." P. Q. TANGENT.

### THE FARMERS' VIEW

Malaga, Washington.—There is something in President Taft's corporation tariff bill that looks to me (a farmer) very much like a healthy colored gentleman. The trusts are required to disgorge two per cent (now one per cent) of their profits. Fifty million dollars of profits represent at one per cent, \$5,000,000 profits. Don't the consumer pay this immense sum, and the same individuals who pay all other tariff taxes. Can't the trusts charge this one per cent tax to their present prices, and increase it to any limit. Are the trusts honest? Then why prosecute them? If they are dishonest, can the government afford to make them partners in business? Is there not a difference between an income tax, and a corporation tax? One compels the person to draw on his bank account, the other on the people and without limit. The more the trusts make, the more the government gets after paying the high tariff on stockings and gloves. Won't these same people be compelled to pay the corporation trust tax also? Ninety-nine per cent is the highest commission ever paid by anybody in the last 100 years. The farmers foot all the bills. ELIAS MARBLE.

### CRITICISMS OF DEMOCRATS

Gainesville, Texas.—In response to your invitation for expressions of opinion from your readers, on the course of the democratic senators and congressmen, who voted against free lumber and iron, I beg leave to say that I think their course is absolutely inexcusable and their position indefensible. The insurgent republicans are entitled to much praise and credit for the fight they have made, and that the democratic senators should not join forces with them is incomprehensible. The "standpat" republicans are entitled to more respect than the democrats who voted against free lumber, for the reason that their platform does not demand a revision of the tariff downward, and the whole history of their party is such that nothing in that direction can be reasonably expected of them, but a vote against free lumber and iron, on the part of a democrat was a repudiation of the national platform, to say nothing of being a betrayal of the people's interests. I condemn and deplore the action of the democrats, who voted contrary to their party's platform and the best interests of their country. Yours truly, J. W. POWERS.

### POPULAR GOVERNMENT

Rock Rapids, Iowa.—I wish to add my testimony to the thousands of others in commendation of Mr. Bryan's fair, dignified and intelligent discussion of political questions. Tolstoy may be the moral Titan of Europe, but Bryan's teaching will mark an epoch in the morality of the human race. It seems to me that at no time in recent years has the outlook for democratic success appeared more favorable than at the present time; with the almost positive assurance that the outlook will become brighter as the searchlight of investigation reveals the perfidy that republicanism has harnessed onto the consumer. A condition that would incite

revolution were it not that the people have been brought into submission by easy stages and crafty methods, which necessitated the subsidizing of the press, the main artery in the life of a free country.

This condition of industrial servitude is fast becoming more intolerable than that of King George and more arbitrary and inhuman than that of the negro slaves. A corporation has no soul to be damned, no body to be kicked, no eyes to see the misery it has wrought and no ears to hear the appeals of want and suffering; devoid of conscience and shame, a monster of depravity according to the ethics of decency; keeping one eye on the pearly gates of heaven and the other on the flesh pots of Egypt. Yet this barnacle on the body politic has been nurtured and fostered and pampered in the tender care of the republican party till its tentacles have penetrated every line of industry.

Three essentials are necessary to the existence of every civilized human being: food, clothing and shelter, and whoever is responsible for unnecessarily enhancing the price of any one of these is a foe to humanity.

The great need of the hour is organization and the dissemination of the truth. Heretofore we have had to fight the entire republican party but now we are ably aided in our struggle for the emancipation of mankind from the bondage of greed by some of the master minds who are battling with their colleagues to save the republican party from going down into perfidious oblivion.

The present session of congress is the greatest school of politics that ever convened in the new world. Some of the most formidable strongholds of the republican party have been hopelessly surrendered. The crusaders of the "full dinner pail" have been derided to scorn by the reality of the empty market basket.

Errors of judgment may be defended but perfidy finds no apologist anywhere. When the emissaries of King George tried to enforce the collection of a tax on tea our ancestors turned Boston harbor into a teapot and King George's demands into ridicule but the descendants of those brave ancestors have been paying a similar tax into the coffers of the American tea trust with scarcely a word of protest. Evidently ancestral ties do not affect posterity's judgment to any marked degree. Taxation without representation was the plea of the colonists for severing their allegiance with the British crown, but how many representatives of the common people are called into the councils of the beef trust when it levies tribute on every man, woman and child in the United States.

Spanish treachery in blowing up the Maine and sending its crew into eternity justified the United States in declaring war against Spain.

But how about the trail of death that the trusts are leaving by means of adulterated food-stuffs and prohibitive prices for necessities. Was sudden death by means of a Spanish mine a more aggravated offense than lingering death by means of embalmed beef? Spain expiated her offense on the altar of war but the beef trust was more fortunate. The slaughter of the innocents has kept Herod's name infamous for twenty centuries, but how about the slaughter of the innocents that is going on every day in the mills and factories of our fair land; a condition made necessary to enable the trust magnates to revel in wealth and fill the columns of the great dailies with scandalous sensations. A system that breeds millionaires and produces paupers can not be defended in the light of reason. The theory of government of the people for the people and by the people becomes a mockery when one man can write the tariff laws over the nation's protest. Wealth and stealth seem more closely related in reality than in epigram when one reads the story of Standard Oil.

Long life to The Commoner and its gallant staff of defenders of our common rights.

P. H. KONZEN.

### WHY NOT "LET WELL ENOUGH ALONE"

Warren W. Edwin & Co., dealers in stocks and bonds at 54 Broad street, New York, don't think so. In their market letter of August 9 to their customers, they refer in this rather uncomplimentary way to the Aldrich-Taft tariff law: "We expect to see the tariff agitation go on in the next few years even more actively than it has gone on in the past few years; the fact that the prices of materials, food, shelter and clothing will rise rapidly—partly as a result of new tariff trusts—can not but lead to renewed tariff discussion when consumers' eyes are turned toward and watching for these probable effects."—The Public, Chicago.