

# The Commoner.

ISSUED WEEKLY.

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Editor and Proprietor.

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The Ohio republicans have learned that it is not their part to think. All they have to do is to accept.

Mr. Beveridge should hasten home if he expects to get his presidential boon inflated before frost time.

For some time in the future Mr. Depew should work his administration views in the reverse motion.

It will be observed that Russia is not the first to exhibit symptoms of saying "enough" in the tariff war.

Of course Kansas has rendered thanks to the administration for permission to harvest a bumper wheat crop.

Our great and good friend, Abdul Hamid Woolomol, sultan of Sulu, is satisfied as long as the salary voucher follows the flag.

George Washington is dead while Congressman Grosvenor is alive, but this is by no means the only difference between them.

The mullet is a fish that bites at doughballs. How many mullets will bite at the Babcock bait thrown out by the wily tariff taxers?

Mr. Hanna insists that the tariff be let severely alone. It must be that he expects to find it necessary to fry an unusual amount of fat in 1904.

General MacArthur still acts on the assumption that telling about it, not stealing the commissary goods, is what menaces the military situation.

The civil government of the Philippines will be answerable to the war department. One of the first tasks set for the Filipinos is to learn the intricacies of our elastic language.

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The man who believes that he benefits himself by taxing himself poor to make others rich is not in a good position to poke fun at those who believe in the faith cure.

It is only within the last three years that Americans have learned to look with composure on the spectacle of a band of patriots ruthlessly slaughtered while defending their homes.

The shortage of wheat harvesters in Kansas was due, of course, to the fact that the unemployed miners of Pennsylvania refused to spend \$50 for car fare in order to earn \$30 binding the grain.

On July Fourth the Filipinos are expected to celebrate the establishment of a civil government that is provided by the war department. The Filipinos deserve it if they fail to see the huge joke.

Mr. Depew shows a commendable disposition to abide by his third term talk. Perhaps Mr. Depew is thinking about those changes of opinion concerning plain duty and criminal aggression.

People who cling to the old superstition that Philadelphia is slow should make note of the rapidity displayed by the municipal authorities when an opportunity is offered for plundering the public.

If the Declaration is to be read at the coming celebrations of the Glorious Fourth it is high time the administration censors began work on it to make it fit the Supreme Court's decision in the Porto Rican cases.

It is estimated that 75,000 yards of ribbon will be required to properly fit out Great Britain's South African war medals. This is only about three yards of ribbon for each British soldier who has died in the unjust war upon the Boers.

The money the shipping subsidy promoters ask for would make habitable many millions of acres of western arid land. But the benefits of irrigation would be enjoyed by the many, while the subsidy would be enjoyed by the few.

It is amusing to read in a high tariff organ words of rejoicing because American manufacturers are competing successfully with foreign manufacturers. The high tariff organs are continually shrieking for protection against competition.

Mr. Foraker announces that the Ohio campaign is to be fought out on national issues. This is an interesting announcement because Mr. Foraker's lieutenants were always loud in declaring that state campaigns should be fought on state issues when they thought that the easiest way of winning.

The harmony existing in the Ohio republican convention indicates that Mr. Foraker

would rather be senator again than to be the leader of the minority fighting against a brutal majority within his own party ranks. Mr. Foraker's fire alarm system appears to be sadly in need of some new battery cells.

The congressional industrial commission announces that it is about to begin an investigation to ascertain why American made goods are sold cheaper in Europe than in the United States. This is a valuable hint to the enterprising gold brick men of the country. Such innocence is remarkable.

**Giving Away Former Postmaster General Public Property.** John Wanamaker of Philadelphia has recently given a practical demonstration of the fact that valuable things belonging to the people are given away to corporations without remuneration. The Philadelphia city council has granted fourteen franchises, covering practically all the street railway rights of the city, and containing no provision for adequate compensation, to a company in which Senators Quay and Penrose and other republican politicians are stockholders. Mr. Wanamaker has written a letter to the mayor urging him to disapprove the franchise. He offers to pay for the favors which the Quay company has received free of charge, the sum of \$2,500,000. As evidence of good faith, Mr. Wanamaker deposits \$250,000 in cash. In his letter Mr. Wanamaker says:

"My offer of \$2,500,000 is not made because I conceive that sum to be the measure of the value of the franchises granted by these ordinances, for I believe them to be much more valuable, but merely as an indication to your honor in concrete form of the magnitude of the gift conferred upon private citizens without return to the people. It seems to me that to give away such franchises for nothing when others stand ready to pay millions for the same rights is little short of public plunder.

"I earnestly urge upon your honor, therefore, that you will veto the ordinance now before you and secure, as you can so well do with your known influence in the legislative body, the sustaining of your veto, in order that new ordinances may be drafted conferring the franchise in question only upon the payment of a sum of money into the public treasury commensurate to the value of the grant.

"I will cheerfully pay the sum I have named, but I suggest to you that if the new ordinance required the franchise to be put up at auction and sold to the highest bidder an amount largely in excess of that which I have designated could be readily secured.

"My sole object is to assist you in the performance of this public duty, and therefore I have made the offer herein set forth that by a veto of the measure in question, for the reasons stated, you may have no difficulty in securing your friends in the councils to sustain you in obtaining for the people an adequate return for the valuable public rights conferred upon private citizens."

Mr. Wanamaker has performed a great service to the public in making this offer. It cannot be doubted that the people in nearly every city of the United States have been grossly imposed upon in the giving away to corporations of valuable street franchises.

The people of Philadelphia through the favor of Mr. Wanamaker, have the privilege of knowing that when the Quay company secured these franchises on the original terms that the city council had voted to the Quay company an immense sum of money out of the pockets of the public. In spite of Mr. Wanamaker's offer the mayor approved the Quay franchises.