

pers applauded, although not so vigorously as they had praised before. As soon, however, as the campaign opened they began to find fault with Judge Parker. They began to describe as elements of weakness the very things which they had pointed to before the convention as elements of strength, and before the campaign was over they were abusing him like a pickpocket and applying all sorts of epithets to him. The more forcibly he attacked the republican position the more bitter became the republican condemnation, and when he pointed out, what everybody ought to know to be true, that the president could not finance his campaign from the treasuries of the trusts without putting himself under obligations to them, expressed or implied, the republican press with one accord denounced him as a slanderer and falsifier. Before the election the republican papers began to prophecy that Judge Parker would be beaten "worse than Bryan was." When the election was over they consigned him to oblivion without a tear or a funeral wreath.

The experience of this campaign ought to be a lesson to those democrats who are tempted to take advice from republican editors and leaders. The democratic party can not strengthen itself by following the course that the partisan republicans point out.

The democratic party, if it is democratic, must expect to arouse opposition. Republican praise of a democratic leader is not the best recommendation he can have. In fact, it is rather complimentary than otherwise for the republicans to assail a democratic leader. First, it is evidence that he is prominent enough to attract their attention, and second, it is evidence that they fear the effect of his attack upon republican policies. It is time for the democrats to counsel with each other and to avoid the snares and traps that are constantly being set by the republican leaders.

The Postmaster Problem

The following letter was written by President Roosevelt in reply to a letter from Congressman Gardner:

White House, Washington, Oct. 28, 1904.—
My Dear Congressman: I have received your letter concerning the appointment of a postmaster at Haverhill, where Attorney General Moody, your predecessor, who has served in my cabinet successively as secretary of the navy and now as attorney general, has recommended that the present incumbent be re-appointed; this present incumbent being a man admitted by every one to have the character and capacity which fit him for the place, and being, from all I can find out, entirely satisfactory to the people of Haverhill. He was appointed by President McKinley, at the suggestion of Mr. Moody, then congressman from that district.

You speak of your "privilege of naming the Haverhill postmaster." In your letter to Mr. Moody you say: "It is not a parallel case in Massachusetts to those other states where senators select the postmasters. In Massachusetts it has been understood that a congressman shall select the postmasters in the cities and towns in his own district." To clear up any possible misapprehension, I would like, at the outset, to say that the senators do not "select" postmasters in any state, while I am president. I consult them always, and in the vast majority of cases act on the recommendations they make; but the selection is mine and not theirs, and time and again during the three years I have been president I have positively refused to select individuals suggested to me for nomination as postmaster by various senators. If I am not satisfied with the character and standing of the man whose name is suggested to me, I never nominate him. I understand perfectly that under the first article of the constitution the senators are part of the appointive power, and that they have the same right to reject that I have to nominate, and that, therefore, the appointment must represent an agreement between them and me; and as the acquaintance of the senator with his state is always much greater than the knowledge of the president can possibly be, it is the normal and natural thing that I should listen to his advice as to these appointments, and I generally do so. But I stop listening to it as soon as I realize that he is advising me wrongly. While it is impossible to avoid making mistakes in nominating thousands of candidates to local offices on the advice of hundreds of different advisers, yet I

never knowingly nominate a candidate whom I think unfit or to whose candidacy I think there is good objection; and the question of unfitness I regard as one to be determined by my judgment and not that of the senator. My practice during the last three years has been exactly that set forth in this statement; and I may add that repeatedly I have refused to nominate, at the request of some senator, a man to succeed some public servant who I felt had particular claims to be renominated, or whom I regarded as markedly superior to his proposed successor.

So much as to my relations with my constitutional advisers. But the relation of a congressman to these appointments rests not upon law but purely upon custom. It has been found in the actual working of our government that, as a rule, the congressman is the best man to consult about the appointments which come under his special ken. Someone must be consulted, and as a rule the congressman is the man whose advice is most apt to be that which can be followed with advantage to the community, and therefore to the party. But this is a mere custom, and I have never hesitated for a moment to deviate from it wherever circumstances arose that satisfied me it was wise and proper and in the interest of the community to do so. In scores of cases I have been obliged to disregard the recommendations of congressmen for all kinds of reasons. Usually I have disregarded them because I have believed that the man recommended to me was unfit. Occasionally I have disregarded them because I felt that the man who was in office was so conspicuously fit that he ought to be retained.

Holding in mind that the recommendation of the congressman is merely a matter of custom, I wish to point out to you that it is also the custom to pay heed to the wishes not only of cabinet officers, but even of senators of the opposite party, and occasionally to the wishes of congressmen of the opposite party, in the case of nominations to office in their own towns. In such cases I have sometimes nominated the man requested by a democratic senator, for instance (always provided I regarded him as fit for the position); and even where I have not done this I generally consulted him about the man whom I did appoint. That I should consult one of the members of my own cabinet in reference to the postmaster of his own city ought to go without saying.

After carefully considering all the circumstances I feel that the wise and proper thing is to nominate Mr. Pinkham to succeed himself. I intend to nominate him because he is a thoroughly fit man, who has been an excellent postmaster, who is of good standing in the community, whose retention in office will undoubtedly be agreeable to the bulk of the patrons of the office, and whose re-appointment is asked for by the attorney general, himself a citizen of Haverhill, who, when in congress, as your predecessor, secured the appointment of this man to office by President McKinley.

I regret to have to take any action which will be displeasing to you; but I do not see how I can avoid doing so in this case. Sincerely yours,
THEODORE ROOSEVELT.
Hon. A. P. Gardner, Hamilton, Mass.

While this letter presents a complete defense of the president's position under existing laws, also presents a splendid reason why the appointment of postmasters should be taken out of the hands of the president and placed in the hands of the people of the community. As long as the responsibility rests upon the president he must be the final judge of the relative merits of aspirants. He can not afford to turn over the appointments to the postmaster general, and if he did the postmaster general could not intelligently consider the number of cases that come before him. Neither can the president farm out the appointment of postmasters to senators or to members of congress. So long as he is responsible for their appointment he must, to the best of his ability, discharge his duty and examine the merits of each case. But how can the president look into the merits of eighty thousand cases? How can he inform himself as to the qualifications of the candidates? How can he ascertain the wishes of the patrons? If he worked ten hours a day and decided ten cases an hour—and that would be only six minutes to each case—he could only review thirty thousand

cases in a year. When you make allowance for the time necessarily devoted to other work and for the necessary interruptions it is apparent that the president can not really consider any large proportion of the cases. He must rely almost entirely upon senators and members of congress, and these may have axes to grind or private reasons for their recommendation. If the law is so changed that the president, while reserving the power of appointment and removal, is restricted to the appointment of candidates named by the voters, the president will be relieved of an enormous burden, congressmen and senators will have more time to devote to public affairs and the various communities will be given the officials of their choice for this position which is not only a responsible one but one with which the community comes into closest contact.

Pushing The Commoner

An Arkansas circuit judge writes:

Yesterday Mr. — met me and said he wanted The Commoner. I remarked that if five would club the price would be 60 cents. Some twenty or more came to me and handed me their money, and I then made a couple of hours' exertion and secured, I believe, sixty names. Almost every man requested me to get your last week's issue, containing your editorials just after election. If possible send each new subscriber that article.

In a few days the judge sent in another list and within two weeks forwarded a list of twenty-two brought by a democratic farmer. Altogether the judge has sent in over ninety names since the election and he lives in a town that has not more than 300 or 400 votes.

What Judge — has done many of The Commoner readers are doing and thousands of others could do. A democratic newspaper is the least expensive literature that can be circulated. The Commoner is issued every week; it fortifies democrats with arguments which they can use in their discussions with republicans; it gives to republicans information which they can not secure through their own papers, and it prepares young men for intelligent citizenship. Besides its editorial department it has a home department for the family, a page of humor and an interesting summary of the current news. You can increase The Commoner's influence by increasing its circulation—will you do it?

Get up a club of five or more, or pick out a liberal minded republican among your acquaintances and make him a present of a year's subscription to The Commoner on condition that he promises to read it. If every present subscriber will take the same interest that the Arkansas judge has The Commoner will guarantee that the democratic party will be a reform party from now on.

The attention of all readers of The Commoner is directed to the special subscription offer:

According to the terms of this offer, cards, each good for one year's subscription to The Commoner will be furnished in lots of five, at the rate of \$3 per lot. This places the yearly subscription rate at 60 cents.

These cards may be paid for when ordered, or they may be ordered and remittance made after they have been sold. A coupon is printed below for the convenience of those who desire to participate in this effort to increase The Commoner's circulation.

THE COMMONER'S SPECIAL OFFER

Application for Subscription Cards

5	Publisher Commoner; I am interested in increasing The Commoner's circulation, and desire you to send me a supply of subscription cards. I agree to use my utmost endeavor to sell the cards, and will remit for them at the rate of 60 cents each, when sold. Name _____ Box, or Street No. _____ P. O. _____ State _____ Indicate the number of cards wanted by marking X opposite one of the numbers printed on end of this blank.
10	
15	
20	
25	
50	
75	
100	

If you believe the paper is doing a work that merits encouragement, fill out the above coupon and mail it to The Commoner, Lincoln, Neb.