

The Commoner.

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THE COMMONER, Lincoln, Neb.

If the beef trust is worrying at all it is capable of great dissimulation.

Does fighting for one's convictions pay in politics? Ask Bob LaFollette.

The senatorial indictment is becoming strong enough to demand a committee room of its own.

It is quite certain that Russia is behind the times, else why the failure to enjoin those strikers?

The Russian government seems to be suffering from a severe case of ingrowing regrets to report.

The Japanese forces have received some unexpected reinforcements in St. Petersburg and Moscow.

The ship subsidy bill seems to be snooping around for the purpose of finding a more euphonious name.

The legal department of the government drove the National Salt company out of existence—into a bigger trust.

"The Japanese take life seriously," remarks an exchange. They appear to have been taking it very successfully of late.

A number of Wall street "captains of finance" are in a good position to write a few magazine articles on "frenzied fumings."

The Russian autocracy seems to have been wise enough to secure a regular Dick military-establishment a long time ago.

Czar Nicholas might take Rhode Island and Delaware as samples of what not to do in the line of furnishing popular government.

The Nashville American says that President John Mitchell is a common slanderer. Puzzle: What is the Nashville American?

"It's a long cry from Neidringhaus to Cockrell," says the Buffalo Courier. A long cry? Why, it's actually beyond telephone distance.

The administration papers of Kansas are keeping silent in all known languages concerning that Booker Washington incident at Wichita.

A ship subsidy law under any other name would be none the less a legalized robbery of the multitude for the enrichment of the few.

Throwing mud at Thomas W. Lawson is not going to make the characters of the "frenzied financiers" look any cleaner by comparison.

If the soul of John Brown did not stop marching on when it heard of that Wichita incident, then we've been misled as to John Brown.

If the president leads a reform movement in his party Senator-elect LaFollette is likely to be

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the Roosevelt candidate before the next republican national convention. Wonder if Vice President elect Fairbanks has ever thought of this possibility?

When the friends of the tariff revise it then it will be time enough to expect some good results from Satan's attempts to revise the moral code.

The Hearst bill for the regulation of railroads is a much better bill than the Hepburn bill but that fact makes it objectionable to the railroad lobbyists.

Gov. LaFollette has just been elected to the United States senate by the Wisconsin legislature. Congratulations. Here's hoping that he may carry into national politics the courage he has shown in his fights within his state—and his speech of acceptance indicates that he will.

Senor Abella, who was elected governor of the province of Camarines, P. I., will not be allowed to take the office, Governor General Wright declaring that Abella bought votes openly in the government building. Senor Abella made the mistake of not organizing himself into a trust before going into the vote buying business in the government building.

Mr. Bryan appreciates the courtesy shown him by the Missouri House of Representatives and the Indiana Senate in inviting him to address them. Gov. Folk's crusade against official corruption furnished him a text in one case and the governor's protest against the use of money in elections and Gov. Hanly's arraignment of corporate influence in politics suggested subjects for the other speeches.

RENEWALS.

A large proportion of Commoner subscriptions will expire with the current month. Subscribers are requested to send in renewals promptly, to avoid delay in re-entering. The new expiration date will usually appear on the wrapper of the second issue after renewal is received.

Senator-elect Burkett of Nebraska, in thanking the legislature for his election, intimated that his election would in a measure take him further away from the people than he had been as a member of the house. This feeling on the part of the revered senators is one reason why the people are demanding popular election of members of that body. The senators are already too far away from the people and altogether too close to the corporations.

Secretary Morton wants to make our nation the second in naval strength. He is willing to concede the first place to England, but he does not want any other nation to equal us on the sea. But why bow to England? If we are going into the big navy business why stop short of first place? Mr. Morton will find himself classed with the "weaklings" if he doesn't look out. But why does this nation need a large navy unless it intends to imitate the European nations in land grabbing?

In some of the southern states an attempt is being made to segregate the school funds so that the colored population will have to rely upon the taxes collected from colored people for the support of schools for colored children. This subject was discussed in the recent Virginia constitutional convention and the proposition was rejected. An editorial published in *The Commoner* at that time is reproduced on another page. The reasoning is still sound. The education of the black race is a great burden on the whites of the south but the remedy is not in allowing them to grow up in ignorance but in an appeal to the north for aid if the load becomes too heavy.

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat makes a weak denial of Mr. Lawson's statement that the Standard Oil people helped to raise \$5,000,000 to carry five doubtful states in 1896, but for fear the Lawson story may be true, the Globe-Democrat hastens to add that it would not reflect on the men who raised the money even if it were true. The trouble with some of the republican papers is that they entirely ignore the fact that the trusts do not give unless

they expect a return, and this return must be made to them at the expense of the people.

Hon. John Temple Graves, the able editor of the Atlanta News, in a speech delivered before the Duckworth club of Cincinnati, on January 7, took for his subject "Definite Democracy." He pointed out the necessity for clearly defined party policies. "Give the party something to vote for," he says, "and the party will vote for it. Make an issue in the people's interest, and the people will meet it. Stand for the things that we believe to be right, and without regard to expediency, the right earnestly championed will ultimately win." This is democratic doctrine and has the right ring to it.

Public Opinion announces that it is going to print a series of articles by an able writer dealing with Lawson himself, his record and his motives. Good for Public Opinion! The country has taken a great deal of interest in what Lawson says about others. It will take an interest in what others say about Lawson, but the public is a great deal more concerned in knowing what has been done in Wall street and how the people can be protected from the practices of Wall street than it is in the motives of those who make the disclosures,—whether the motives of Lawson himself or the motives of those who write about him.

A St. Louis reader of *The Commoner* wants to know why a stolen horse should be returned to the owner, while a stolen franchise is held to be good against the people from whom it was stolen? The *Commoner* is not able to give any good reason. If anybody attempts to give a reason, it will probably be that the stockholders are innocent purchasers, but as that does not protect one who buys a stolen horse innocently, it can hardly be accepted as a sound reason. The time may come when the courts will treat a stolen franchise as they treat anything else stolen, but probably before that time comes cities will cease to either sell or give away their franchises to private corporations.

The Chicago Chronicle is growing hysterical, and in its hysteria it deviates even farther than usual from the truth. In a recent issue the Chronicle, perpetrating one of its many ill-natured tirades against Mr. Bryan, declares that Mr. Bryan courted notoriety by declaring in a recent address that "President Roosevelt is the greatest president the country has ever had." There are two wild and unfounded assertions in the quoted statements, viz: Mr. Bryan did not seek notoriety as alleged, and he certainly did not assert that "President Roosevelt is the greatest president this country has ever had." Not even the Chicago Chronicle believes Mr. Bryan said it, but what the Chronicle believes and what the Chronicle says editorially are two vastly different things. However, if it will soothe the Chronicle's lacerated feelings Mr. Bryan will admit that President Roosevelt is the greatest president this country has had since William McKinley. But as long as he remembers Washington, Jefferson, Jackson, Madison, Lincoln and others, Mr. Bryan will decline to go further.

The preservation of American forests is worthy of all the attention that is being given it, and more. But a little careful consideration will emphasize the folly of putting a small premium on the preservation of our forests and a large premium on the destruction of those same forests. The tariff on lumber is a huge premium on the destruction of our native timber and at the same time is a burdensome tax on the people generally and for the benefit of a few lumber barons who have, through favoritism and chicanery, secured possession of the timber lands. As a rule people are rather shortsighted, and it is hard to interest them in a proposition that promises rewards only to their children and their children's children. Reforestation is offering such rewards, hence the lack of interest taken by the general public. But when an immediate reward in the shape of a tariff bounty is offered, men hasten to take advantage of it, and the result is the rapid destruction of the forests in this country. The work of preservation would be greatly accelerated by removing the premium on destruction.