FEBRUARY 24, 1905

The Commoner.

Under Other Flags

With the coming of a brave man water companies in cities it has for there is change. He writes his views with candor and courage. His letters are plain, open. He takes the public dividends allowed must be used in rento his confidence. Such a man is Villiam J. Bryan. Week after week e has written his views for The Commoner, has set out in black and white his opinions. He has not dodged, he has not shirked, he has not been silent. If any one wishes to know what Mr. Bryan thinks on any public question, read The Commoner. Somehow and someway the people admire frankness and bravery. Mr. Bryan might have won more applause from the politicians had he been a trimmer and kept quiet. but he would not have had the respect and admiration of the people. The voters are ready to rally to the support of any honest, sincere, courageous man who speaks his mind and stands for something. The endorsement which Missouri gave to Folk and which Massachusetts gave to Douglas indicate this. It is worth while to have the aggresive qualities of courage and sincerity whatever may come of the negative quality of consistency. So after all has been said books do not hurt a public man and records do not hurt so long as books and records are straightforward, sincere, outspoken and brave.

Mr. Bryan has written a new book. It reveals his character as all his writings do. "Under Other Flags" is the title because a large share of the space ards of art and taste are rising and in the volume is taken up with repro- the forces of nature are being harductions of Mr. Bryan's letters from | nessed to do the work of man. Steam, abroad. It is to a considerable extent, madly escaping from its prison walls. however, comments upon affairs in the United States and includes lectures and speeches delivered by him on various occasions. Even the foreign letters are cury, has become the message bearer suggestive for American citizens in of millions. Even the waves of the their references to political and econ- air are now obedient to the command omic conditions. The book is under of man and intelligence is flashed other flags only for the benefit of those across the ocean without the aid of who dwell under the American flag. All who read the new book by Mr. Bryan will have forced upon them this physical well-being as well as to enthought: Here is a man who is striving to help his fellow-men. There is no mere pious cant, no sentimental gush, no rhetorical flourishes, words for words sake, but clear, vigorous, common-sense discussion of ways and manifest between those of the same means for the betterment of humankind. Mr. Bryan was never a man of one idea. He was not visionary, impracical, radical, destructive, as his detractors declared. This book shows the contrary. It is plain and simple, it is full of common sense, it breathes the spirit of lofty patriotism, it is an appeal for the best in man. "Under Other Flags" has an important chapter on municipal ownership. There is local application in some things that he says. * * * In a letter from France Mr. Bryan commends "The Simple Life," the book by Rev. Charles Wagner, as "a protest against the materialism which is making man the slave of his possessions," "I shall remember my communion with this apostle of simplicity as one remembers a visit to a refreshing spring." From Switzerland, Mr. Bryan writes relative to the initiative and referendum which he looks upon with favor. He also in the letter from Berne makes plea for permanent residences for our ambassadors and other representatives abroad. In a letter from Germany, Mr. Bryan discusses the growth of socialism in Europe. Where private ownership of public utilities is still permitted the regulation of the corporations holding these franchises is generally more strict than in the United States. "Where parliament charters gas and

some years been the practice to limit the dividence that can be earned-any surplus earnings over and above the ducing the price paid by the consumer. I fear that our money magnates would be at a loss to find words to express their indignation if any such restriction was suggested in America, and yet is it not a just and reasonable retriction?"

Mr. Bryan writes from Russia that the great needs of the Russians are free speech and a free press. "Publicity will often deter an official from wrong-doing when other restraints would be insufficient, and those who are anxious to do well ought to welcome anything that would throw light upon their path. De Tocqueville some fifty years ago predicted a large place for Russia among the nations of Europe and my visit to the great empire of the northeast convinced me that Russia with universal education, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion and constitutional self-government would exert an influence upon the destinies of the old world to which it would be difficult to set a limit."

From Rome Mr. Bryan wrote: "The world has made and is making great progress in education and in industry. The percentage of illiteracy is everywhere steadily decreasing. The standturns myriad wheels and drags our commerce over land and sea, while electricity, more fleet of foot than Merwires. With this dominion over nature man has been able to advance his large his mental horizon, but has the moral development of the people kept pace with material prosperity? The growing antagonism between capital and labor, the lack of sympathy often race and even the same religion when enjoying incomes quite unequal-these things would seem to indicate that the heart has lagged behind the head and the purse. The restoration of the equilibrium and the infusing of a feeling of brotherhood that will establish justice and good will must be the aim of those who are sincerely interested in

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the progress of the race. This is pre-lead his portion of the Christian eminently the work of our religious church in this great endeavor." teachers although it is a work in which the laity as well as the clergy must of Count Leo Tolstoy, the intellectual take part. After meeting Pius X, late giant of Russia, the moral Titan of the beloved patriarch of Venice, I feel Europe and the world's most conspicuassured that he is peculiarly fitted to ous exponent of the doctrine of love,"

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A sympathetic account of the views



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