

Words of Cheer From all Sections of the Country

Inclosing his primary pledge Earl Bonnon, editor of the Spencer (Ia.) Herald says: "The plan is a good one. Will reproduce the article from The Commoner in this week's issue of the Herald."

T. F. Alexander, editor of the Argonaut, Sparta, Ill., writes: "The Argonaut in the issue of the week following, published in full the article and pledge that was published in The Commoner of March 17. We are thoroughly in accord with the plan of Mr. Bryan and herewith send our pledge and will later on again publish the call and pledge to organize, and call attention of our readers to the pledge. We believe that a large majority of the democrats are in accord with Mr. Bryan in this matter and it only remains to call the importance of the necessity of organization to win to get them in line."

A particularly interesting letter comes from William H. Lamb of Plainville, Ind. Mr. Lamb writes: "I wish to say a word in regard to your primary pledge plan. I have always been a republican and voted against Mr. Bryan in 1900, but for the last two years, I have been a constant reader of The Commoner and have changed my views considerably. I have now a great deal more admiration for Mr. Bryan and his courageous and manly advocations and will gladly donate all the aid I can muster in helping on to victory his ideas in 1908. I wish to cast in my lot with a party that gets close to the people. Your Primary plan will work a vast amount of good. I am with you."

Hon. Alva Adams, who at the last election was elected governor of Colorado, but was deprived of his office by the republican legislature, writing under date of Pueblo, says: "Replying to the invitation in The Commoner I enclose my primary pledge. If you can induce every citizen to sign and live up to this pledge the cause of the people is won. The vast majority of American citizenship is honest and patriotic, but they are careless and indifferent in the performance of their civic duties. An organized minority is stronger than a disorganized majority. This is the power of those corporate elements that aspire to dictate the policies of this republic. If the people will attend primaries and vote their convictions at the polls they will be omnipotent as Lincoln said, 'When the mass of the people combine in the defense of their rights and liberty truly it may be said that the gates of hell can not prevail against them.'"

George W. Moore, attorney at law, Detroit, Mich., writes: "I was much pleased with Mr. Bryan's editorial urging voters to pledge themselves to attend all their party's primaries and I herewith enclose my pledge. Under present conditions if the people do not attend their primaries, corporation wealth will select their candidates and democratic candidates so selected will certainly be defeated at the polls. Democratic voters in control of our primaries means a democratic platform and a democratic victory."

T. T. Hudson, Minnesota's member of the democratic national committee, writing from Duluth, says: "The democratic party organization will be greatly strengthened if the plan outlined in The Commoner of March 17 is generally adopted by members of the party. It is of the utmost importance that the rank and file in the party shall participate in all deliberations had in shaping the policy and tenets of the party. When the rank and file of the party voluntarily act upon what shall be party principles, there is no doubt their determination will appeal most strongly to those who believe in the application of the principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence in the affairs of this government. So overwhelming is the proportion of this class of our citizens, that when they become interested in any cause which commends itself to the conscience of the true, unselfish American citizen, there is no question of its correct settlement. So repugnant to the rank and file of the democratic party is the evil of "special privileges" in governmental affairs, that when any considerable proportion of them pass upon a declaration of principles, the question of granting "special privileges" by the government is sure to be eliminated. Democrats are as much opposed to granting "special privileges" to members of its own party as they are to granting "special privileges" to members of any other party and the sooner the party leaders realize this, the sooner the party will control the affairs of this government. The plan outlined by The Commoner is admirable because it invites

the rank and file of the party to participate in the consideration and determination of the principles and the policy of the party and it ought to have the earnest co-operation of democrats everywhere as a preliminary step to strengthen and determine the organization of the party."

E. L. Masters, attorney at law, Chicago, writes: "The plan for organizing for the campaign of 1908, as outlined in the editorial in The Commoner, entitled "Primary Pledge—Organize Now," meets with my approval. It has the great merit of beginning with the people themselves, which is the only democratic way to organize any way, and build up a party movement upon popular sovereignty. So far as the pledge is concerned, I am also in favor of that. The truth is, that two or three determined men of ideas could control local organizations, even against reactionary influences. And if one or two such men in primary district will attend the primaries and the club meetings between now and 1908 and make himself heard, he will influence and direct the people toward the expression of democratic principles. I have signed the primary pledge, and enclose herewith."

Cyrus E. Davis, attorney at law, Bloomfield, Ind., writes: "Permit me to heartily indorse, through The Commoner, the 'primary pledge' as outlined and advocated in The Commoner of March 17. The plan has many things to commend it. It will keep alive an interest in the party's cause among the masses. It will conduce to the organization and control of the party by its masses, instead of its self constituted leaders. It will insure harmony as no other plan would insure it; since if difference of opinions arise (and in a party whose masses are addicted to independent thinking such as the democratic party, such differences will arise), concessions necessary to harmony are more likely to be made, where each feels that the platform really expresses the thought of the majority, than where an impression prevails that the platform is made by a 'machine.' I hope every democrat will sign the pledge and keep it."

C. J. Smyth of Omaha, formerly attorney general for Nebraska and one of the delegates to the democratic national convention of 1904, writes: "The suggestion that those interested in committing and holding the democratic party to sound principles should pledge themselves to attend every primary which may have anything to do with the selection of those who will take part in forming the next democratic platform is, I think, a good one. When the mass of our party is aroused, the decision reached is usually thoroughly democratic. The party would never go wrong, in my judgment, if all its members could be induced to participate in the selection of those who constitute its conventions. The trouble in the past has been that but a very small portion of those who affiliated with the party went to the primaries when the selection of delegates to the county, state and national conventions was the only question up for disposition, and as a consequence the few who did go determined the result, very often in opposition to the wishes of the party at large. I strongly approve anything that will result in bringing out a full party vote at our primary election, and I think the plan suggested by The Commoner will contribute much in that direction."

Albert Dollenmayer, president and manager of the Minneapolis Daily Times, writes: "Today Minnesota politically, is typical of the nation at large. The people have had a taste of the primary election principle and want more. They have learned the lesson of independent voting, as shown by the election of John A. Johnson, the democratic nominee for governor, notwithstanding the tremendous majority for Roosevelt (216,651), over Parker (55,187). Notwithstanding these figures the conditions in Minnesota warrant a movement in favor of party organization—not for any particular candidate, nor indeed for any fixed paramount issue but for the true spirit of democracy. This makes Mr. Bryan's plan of pledging democrats to go to the primaries and stand up for their honest convictions a particularly happy suggestion for Minnesota. Governor Johnson has made a splendid record as a careful, conscientious and courteous executive, while the republican majority in the legislature has apparently done everything possible by an indulgence in peanut politics to set off his excellent qualities. We are glad to see Mr. Bryan take the lead in this fundamental

program and I enclose herewith my personal pledge to attend the party primaries."

J. R. Corrigan, attorney at law, Minneapolis, and delegate to the democratic convention of 1904, writes: "Your editorial of March 17 inst., suggesting a plan for the organization of the true and tried democrats, seems to me, to be the only feasible manner of initiating such a movement so far in advance of A. D. 1908. Your intimation that the platform for that campaign ought not to be written now, and can not be used for the purposes of present organization, is absolutely sound and reasonable. Practical and sensible radicalism in party politics and executive government is what the great majority of the American people desire, and they will adopt a platform which embodies this idea when the next presidential battle is on, and follow the leader whose metal has been tested by the blowpipes of plutocracy, and who has kept the faith. I enclose a signed primary pledge with great pleasure."

James C. Dahlman of Omaha, Nebraska's member of the democratic national committee, writes: "I noticed your editorial in The Commoner outlining a plan of organization for the fight to be carried on within the democratic party between now and the next national convention. I heartily approve of the same and you can count on my hearty support in this movement. I believe that this plan as outlined by you will bring together the rank and file of our party and will result in them sending representatives to the next national convention who will write a platform that can not be misunderstood."

J. M. Head, formerly mayor of Nashville, Tenn., writes: "Your proposed plan of organization and arousing interest in public questions certainly commences at the right place and is in the right direction. No man even professing to be a democrat, however little respect he may have for the wishes of the masses of the people, can afford openly to antagonize your plan. That it will be secretly antagonized, and an effort made to defeat or misrepresent the wishes of the people is as certain as that the convention will meet. The people, however, are ripe for this movement. I am exceedingly glad that it has been commenced in time, and you may record my name as one of those democrats who will certainly attend all the primaries of my party during the remainder of my life unless unavoidably prevented."

Charles A. Barnes of Jacksonville, Ill., and county judge of Morgan county, writes: "I am pleased indeed to see the plan of organization as detailed in The Commoner of March 17th, and I hope every active democrat in the land will at once sign your pledge and join in this movement. The democratic party, believing fully in the fundamental principles of Jefferson and Jackson are undoubtedly in the majority in this country, if they can organize around one standard and have true and proper leaders, who will carry the banner that they want unfurled. By this pledge and its movement, each democrat will have a voice in the building of the platform and the making of the issues for the campaign, and by that method we will get principles that will interest all for the good of the party, and there will not be "stay at homes" as we had last fall. This is and has been for many years a strong democratic county, but it went republican last fall, simply because the democrats took no interest in the campaign and would not go to the polls to help elect a ticket and support a platform that was the outgrowth of the state convention where a few muzzled the majority, and the people were allowed to express no voice in either candidates or issues. I hope your plan will appeal to every democratic citizen and that as a result, we can have a united, determined and hopeful party."

John W. Tomlinson, attorney at law, Birmingham, Ala., writes: "The primary plan, outlined by Mr. Bryan in The Commoner, is very generally commended in this section of the country. Since we have had primaries in Alabama, the people have a more effective voice in public affairs, state, county and municipal."

Walter Williams, editor of the Columbia (Mo.) Herald, writes: "I have read with interest and cordial approval the plan of organization proposed in The Commoner's editorial of March 17. With a democratic platform written by the democratic voters at the primaries the party will win in 1908, and, what is far better, it will deserve to win."