

Men Neglect a Duty They Owe Their Country When They Fail to Go to the Primaries

William F. Sapp, chairman of the democratic state committee for Kansas, has written to The Commoner a letter in which he gives his endorsement to the primary pledge plan. Mr. Sapp says: "The people neglect a duty they owe their country when they fail to go to the primary, and indicate by their presence, and their voice, what they desire. The local caucus is intended to choose men who voice the sentiments of the people, and the failure of the citizen to attend, permits a few to direct the policy of the party, which is some times out of harmony with the best thought and wish of the people; hence, if the democrats can be made to promise that they will attend the primaries, and there direct their delegates in the course that should be pursued, there can be no question but what the platform written at the national convention of 1908 will reflect the desire and good judgment of the voter. Again, if the people can be interested in the cause of good government enough to attend the primaries, they will have more interest at stake when election day comes, in bringing about the things they have asked for, and will be more likely to attend the polls. I think the plan a good one and should be followed."

Joseph W. Folk, governor of Missouri, writes: "The primary pledge suggested by The Commoner, is a good idea and I endorse the plan most heartily. If every man would sign the pledge and carry it out the problem of government by the people would be near solution."

H. W. Clendenin, editor of the Illinois State Register, writing under date of Springfield, April 12, says: "The primary pledge proposed in The Commoner is an admirable plan to secure a full and free expression of democratic sentiment and embody it in declaration and action. It is commendable, also, because nothing is required of the democrat signing the pledge but what it is both the privilege and duty of every democrat to do. If every democrat in the land will sign that pledge and carry out the promises he makes in signing it, the result will be a united and probably triumphant party at the next presidential election. I most heartily endorse and commend the plan. It should be signed by every democratic voter."

E. C. Wall of Milwaukee writes: "Your advice to democrats in The Commoner of March 17, to attend all primaries; express their views and help organize the party, appeals to me as patriotic, and in the interest of good government. You very properly say that 'no cause can prosper permanently that does not appeal to the moral sense of the country.' It is the duty of every man having the right to vote to take an active interest in the affairs of his country and when all do this corruption in public places will no longer exist. The members of the democratic party have a great work before them and every one has a responsibility that requires him to do his full duty. If everyone follows your advice by attending all the primaries and expressing his views the result will be that when conventions meet, the will of the people will be the words of the platforms and not the words of cliques or special interests. May your good advice bear abundant fruit."

Henry L. Bienfield, secretary Iroquois club, San Francisco, writes: "Enclosed find primary pledge. It is hardly in order that I sign the enclosed pledge, speaking for the San Francisco Iroquois club as its secretary. We have always been true to honest democratic rule and principles; we are working on the plan of municipal ownership of all public utilities. When this is accomplished in our immediate vicinities, the national trusts will be not alone a thing of the past, but very simple matters to control, for two reasons. First you educate the people to their just rights; second, you have no corporation separators or congressmen to represent the privileged class. We are now preparing for the August primaries and our democratic slogan will be 'Ownership of Public Utilities.'"

Jay La Dell, state committeeman, Luverne, Minn., writes: "Being unlike the citizen of Iowa, who said he was fifty years of age and had never cast a vote for president in his life, I cast my first vote for Lewis Cass in 1848, and have voted and labored for the success of every democratic candidate for president from that day to this, including Greeley and Parker. I supported these two gentlemen because they were the candidates of my party, not because they represented real Jeffersonian-Bryan principles, which mean equal and exact justice to all, special privileges to none. During all these years I have never failed to at-

tend the primaries of my party. I am now seventy-eight years old, and according to Dr. Osler should have been chloroformed eighteen years ago. But believing that real democracy, so ably advocated by The Commoner, means the greatest good to the greatest number, I will not only sign the pledge, but do all in my power to arouse an interest among my neighbors to do likewise. We forget that ours is a government 'of the people,' and it rests with the people themselves to say whether it shall be conducted in the interest of all or continue in the interest of the favored few, at the expense of the many."

Dr. C. O. Lewis, Fayette, Mo., writes: "The campaign of 1904 and the result of the election which followed it ought to convince all democrats of the necessity of organization. It has been said that 'a chain is no stronger than its weakest link,' and unfortunately for the democratic party the analogy has been too long apparent. Selfish interests have in many instances during the past decade shown that the desire for gain has outweighed the love of principle. Yet, notwithstanding such apostasy, the altar erected by Thomas Jefferson still has its devotees; and from its glowing embers is wafted daily the incense of millions of honest hearts. As in the perilous days of the revolution, men and women today are teaching their children to love justice and hate iniquity, and to keep ever in remembrance those great truths 'that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.' Nor is the fact to be regretted that the adherents to these principles are not confined to party limits; for, it is to be admitted that there are untold thousands of American citizens in whose breasts abide that lofty spirit of patriotism, inherited from their forefathers, which only awaits a united effort to bring the government of their country back to its original purity and simplicity. Such an effort The Commoner is now heading; and it is a pleasure to me to aid that effort by handing in my primary pledge."

Judge J. I. Phelps, El Reno, Okla., writes: "Your plan of organization by 'the primary pledge' system is indeed a unique one, and at the same time one decidedly practical and also a plan that any good citizen may consistently approve of. Our political system is sadly in need of purification; the democratic party needs organization and the democracy of El Reno heartily approves of your system and assures you that many pledges will be sent in within the next few months."

TROUBLE IN THE PHILIPPINES

The returning transport "Buford," which arrived recently at Portland, brings some returning soldiers, and also news of trouble in the Islands. The Army and Navy Journal, published at Manila, declares that "the clouds of war are growing darker and darker with each passing day," and says "the general opinion among citizens and officers is that the insular government is up against a difficult situation." The Army and Navy Journal also prints a letter which, according to the Portland Oregonian would lead to the belief that "all of the islands composing this group are on the verge of insurrection."

While the high officials in the republican party talk of benevolent assimilation, the reports brought by returning soldiers indicate that the Filipinos regard the Americans as enemies and are unalterably opposed to foreign rule. This is perfectly natural, and it is strange that any person can be so ignorant of history and of human nature as to expect it to be otherwise. No instance is on record where people have welcomed a foreign ruler. If our country intended to exterminate the Filipinos and then colonize the Islands with Americans, some might defend the position on the ground that the Americans would make better use of the Islands than the Filipinos and develop a higher civilization. This is the argument that has been used to justify the supplanting of the Indians, but there is no thought of colonizing the Islands. Americans will not live there, and it is not likely that any other white race will ever live there. We must choose between the independence of the islands and a colonial policy under which a carpet bag government will be held in place by a standing army.

That has been the situation in India for a hundred and fifty years, and the Indian people are as rebellious now as they were a century ago. A colonial system is not only contrary to the

American theory of government, but it must always rest upon force. How long will it be before the costly and ruinous policy of imperialism will be repudiated by the country?

DODGING "IMMENSE SUMS"

Protesting against municipal ownership, the Chicago Chronicle says: "One reason why municipal ownership of the street railways would not produce low fares is that the city would have to pay the traction companies an immense sum for franchises which the traction companies get for nothing."

Does this explain why the traction companies have so vigorously objected to municipal ownership?

Of course, everyone knows that the monopolists are very reluctant to accept "immense sums for franchises which they got for nothing." But it would seem a bit unreasonable to expect these gentlemen to go to extreme lengths in order that the people might avoid paying into the monopolists' pockets "immense sums of money." Might they not be persuaded to relax their patriotic efforts just a little, even though they lay themselves open to the suspicion of being willing to accept "immense sums of money" for something which they got for nothing?

MERELY SAMPLES

Responses to The Commoner's special subscription offer continue at a gratifying rate. Following are samples of the many letters written by readers who are co-operating in the effort to increase The Commoner's circulation and thereby extend its sphere of usefulness.

Dr. C. O. Lewis of Fayette, Mo., writes: "I am glad to be able to add the enclosed of five new subscribers to The Commoner." It may not be out of place to say that this makes 167 subscriptions sent in by Dr. Lewis since January, 1905.

A New York reader writes: Herewith find list of twelve subscribers and money order for \$7.20 to pay for the same according to your club of five rate.

George Blamer, Lamar, Mo., writes: Find herewith list of twelve subscribers and money order to pay for the same. I will send you more soon.

Charles B. Chancellor, Parkersburg, W. V., writes: I hand you herewith list of twelve subscribers with money order to pay for the same.

C. H. Weed, Devils Lake, N. D., writes: Herewith find list of eighteen subscribers. Will try and send you more within a few days.

M. B. Moring, Centerville, Iowa, writes: I enclose herewith ten subscribers for The Commoner at your clubbing rates.

V. A. Kinnison, Welsh, I. T., writes: Please find enclosed list of nine subscribers and money order to pay for the same.

According to the terms of the special subscription 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.

Anyone ordering these cards may sell them for \$1 each, thus earning a commission of \$2 on each lot sold, or he may sell them at the cost price and find compensation in the fact that he has contributed to the educational campaign.

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.
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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.