

A UNITED EFFORT FOR DEMOCRATIC SUCCESS

New interest in the primary pledge plan is noticeable among the newspapers. The Commoner's exchange list is very large and many newspaper references to this work have doubtless been overlooked. Newspaper editors are requested to direct their readers' attention to the primary pledge plan and they will confer a favor if they will mail under first-class postage a clipping of any editorial reference they may see fit to make.

An interesting suggestion comes from C. C. Walker, Duhring, W. Va. Mr. Walker suggests that democratic newspapers publish the names of those who have signed the primary pledge in their respective counties. If democratic editors will work along this line and reproduce names and letters from signers in their own counties they will find that their own readers will be greatly interested in the publication.

The Gunnison (Colo.) News-Champion, edited by H. F. Lake, Jr., keeps the primary pledge standing and is urging its readers to co-operate. In a letter to The Commoner, Editor Lake says: "There is no question but if the president consistently carries out the program suggested by his Denver speech, that there will be a tear up in the republican party beside which the political re-adjustment of '96 will appear dwarfed in the comparison. Then the great danger to democracy will be the attempt of its erstwhile 're-organizers' to again gain control of its policies. We wish you God speed in this enterprise, and you may call on us for any assistance within our power."

The Haskell (Texas) Free Press, J. E. Poole, editor, is co-operating along the lines of the primary pledge plan. Editor Poole sends to The Commoner pledges signed by himself as well as by a number of the readers of his newspaper. Mr. Poole says: "I am very glad to see that Mr. Bryan's plan for democratic organization is meeting with such hearty and widespread response; it portends victory for the party and its real principles. With the party organization under the control of the politicians alone, as is too often the case, many of whom are controlled by corporations and monopolistic influences, party victory does not mean or bring what it should to the masses. But on the other hand let the people become sufficiently aroused and interested to take the organization into their own hands from the primary up, as they can easily do, being the majority, and there is then good hope for the emancipation of the people from the oppression and extortions of the money power. That great power has grown so confident of its unshakable hold upon the country that it is growing reckless. But we have the hope of wresting the government from the spirit of imperialism which is menacing the foundation principles upon which our free institutions were erected and planting it again on the Declaration of Independence and the constitution as they were understood and applied by their framers."

The Malone (New York) Forum, edited by M. B. Murphy, is vigorously pushing the primary pledge plan. The Forum has been waging a good fight for municipal ownership and it has recently scored several important victories, the democrats and citizens winning in the recent city election by 130 majority. Editor Murphy says: "Democratic democracy will win every time. The people, both democrats and republicans, are naturally democratic and can be united to work against the party of plutocracy and special privilege. This last numerically small party, or coterie, has both feet planted on the necks of democrats and republicans alike. The latter can be induced to work and vote with their democratic neighbors against the pirates who are oppressing citizens of both parties. That is the way we put the matter before our Malone voters and won, and we can win in every town or city by this method. The Forum is heart and soul with you in every move to rescue the most progressive people on earth from the thralldom of the most gigantic system of monopoly the world has ever seen. This people are bound hand and foot to the juggernaut of monopoly and forced to pay tribute on life's necessities to as heartless a gang of freebooters and pirates as ever roved the Spanish main with a black flag at the mast head."

The Nodaway (Mo.) Forum, edited by C. J. Colden, has many good words to say for the primary pledge plan and keeps the pledge standing in its columns. Editor Colden insists that "a clean primary is the first step in good government," and he adds: "It is radical democracy

or irretrievable defeat. Democrats had just as well put the war paint on. The velvet fringe of Wall street is polluted with consciousnessless plutocracy."

Following are some extracts from the editorial columns of the Monroe City (Mo.) Democrat, edited by W. J. Rouse:

"If you believe that the people should make the democratic platform, sign the primary pledge and get your neighbors to do likewise. Can get blanks at the Democrat office."

"The people must make the next platform of the democratic party. The way to do this is to attend the primaries or precinct conventions of the party and there speak. In this way only can the people hope to win a grand victory."

"With a platform made by the rank and file of the grand old democratic party, the people will be governing the United States after the 4th of March, 1909. The time to take up the work of organizing is now."

"Are you a democrat? Do you believe that the party platform should be made by the majority of the party? Do you believe in a government of, for and by the people? Do you believe that the best citizens owe it to their country, to their families, to themselves to do what they can for the good of our country? If so sign a primary pledge, and do not stop at that, but get your good neighbor democrats to do the same and let us begin work now for a big democratic victory at the next national election."

The Manitowoc (Wis.) Pilot is in favor of having the platform written by the rank and file. In an editorial entitled "Democracy and Success," the Pilot says:

"There are too many plutocrats in the democratic party and too many democrats in the republican party. If the real democracy of the country would achieve success, they must first show that they deserve success. This can not be done by compromising with the thousands of ultra-conservatives that are now known as democrats. Not a few of these ultra-conservative democrats are extremely plutocratic. These democratic plutocrats must no longer be permitted to dictate the policy of the democratic party. They must have no voice in state and national democratic conventions. Their principles must not be incorporated into democratic platforms. They must have no voice in the conduct of democratic campaigns.

"There is no room for two republican parties. Therefore, plutocratic democrats should be induced, by all honorable means available, to sever their connection with the true democracy. As long as they remain in the democratic party, that party can not wield the influence requisite for the bringing about of those reforms for which there is a crying need. They constitute a dead weight of which democracy must be relieved.

"Let there be an end to all paltering on the part of real democrats. The democratic party must not stoop to any species of cant, buncombe, finesse and chicanery. These things have no place in genuine democracy, which is the torch-bearer of human progress—which has wielded a tremendous influence in the shaping of American institutions and with which, in a large measure, must rest the perpetuity of free government.

"Democracy must be all that its present leader would have it to be if it wishes to stand a fair show for success. It must deserve success. It must not endeavor to secure votes by compromising its principles. It must show all time-serving. It must show its colors and defend its principles with unwavering zeal.

"If democracy will do these things—if it will eliminate the plutocratic element—it will deserve success and stand a good show to win success in 1908. Tens of thousands that are now known as republicans would speedily identify themselves with an unadulterated democracy."

The Kentucky Gazette, published at Lexington, keeps standing the primary pledge, and calls upon its readers to push the work.

The Southeast Missourian, published at New Madrid, Mo., and edited by W. W. Waters, displays the primary pledge plan in its columns and urges its readers to get in line.

The Cape May County Times, published at Sea Isle City, New Jersey, and edited by Matthew Jefferson, displays the primary pledge plan, and says: "The Times urges its readers to con-

sider the following editorial taken from The Commoner on March 17, and asks those who are in favor of carrying out the plan as outlined therein to sign the pledge below printed and send the same to the Times office. All pledges received at this office will be forwarded to The Commoner."

The El Reno (Oklahoma) Daily Globe, edited by J. M. Tadlock, presents the primary pledge plan to its readers and invites their co-operation.

The Memphis News-Scimitar prints the primary pledge and asks its readers to sign same and return to the political department of the News-Scimitar. The News-Scimitar says:

"The importance of enlisting each individual voter in the work of making the future elections satisfactory to the people has been taken up by the Hon. William J. Bryan, and a movement has been started by the statesman of the west to get every democrat in the country to agree to attend all primaries and take proper action on all questions. The movement does not bind the individual to any particular action. It only makes him agree to think for himself and to take part in primaries. The theory of the Nebraskan is that the people will do what is right if they will all act, and that a pledge for action is equivalent to an agreement to doing right. This great faith in the people is shared in Memphis, and the pledge card that is sent out by Mr. Bryan is reproduced for Memphis voters. It will be of interest to see how many Memphians will take the trouble to fill out this blank. If it is filled out and observed by a majority of the voters of Memphis there is no question as to the great benefit that will come to the people of the city."

The Lexington, Ky., Gazette reproduces the primary pledge, saying: "The first step in the great battle is organization. Democracy can not succeed with any candidate unless it is organized. Therefore we urge upon every democrat to sign the primary pledge."

The Public, Louis F. Post's paper, says: "Mr. Bryan has happily phrased the new impulse of which he is urging the democratic party to take advantage. 'Back to the people,' does best describe, as he says, 'the tendency which is manifesting itself in the nation and in most of the states.' Away from centralized power, away from imperialism, away from militarism, away from special privilege, away from paternalism, and—'back to the people!'"

The Eminence, Mo., Wave says: "We are very favorably inclined towards Mr. Bryan's pledge, which numerous exchanges are urging, and as far as it goes it is excellent. But there is one omission that recent events prove to be as important as that which is inserted. We suggest that the pledge be amended to say 'and we pledge our votes in the general election to the democratic ticket as nominated.' Soreheads, bolters and traitors can harp on primaries as loudly as true democrats, but it's the ballots for democracy that count when the battle is on."

The North Platte, Neb., Independent-Democrat says: "Many democrats are responding to the plan of organization submitted by Mr. Bryan and many are signing the primary pledge. It is generally welcomed by the real democrats who see in it such a revival of pure democracy as will revivify and reorganize the democratic party upon a basis where the rank and file of the party would be heard in its councils. Letters accompany many of the signed pledges and there seems to be a revival among the adherents of that party. It is the one means by which the voice of all democrats can be heard and a platform adopted that is in touch with the will of the people. Those who have grown despondent will be cheered by the purposeful attitude of the party. The fragmentary portions of the party will be drawn together and there will be such a consolidation of factional force that it will put hope and vigor in the breast of every democrat and be the precursor of future democratic victories. It is in the primaries where corruption must be quenched. It is in the primaries where the people must act to bring about the necessary reforms. It is in the primary where they must engraft and exemplify the democratic doctrine of 'equal rights to all and special privileges to none.' And until the power of the people is enlarged it is the one sign of vantage which they hold."