

The Commoner

ISSUED WEEKLY

WILLIAM J. BRYAN Editor and Proprietor. CHARLES W. BRYAN Publisher.
RICHARD L. METCALFE Associate Editor. Editorial Rooms and Business Office 324-330 So. 12th Street.

Entered at the postoffice at Lincoln, Nebraska, as second-class mail matter.

One Year.....\$1.00	Three Months.....25c
Six Months.....50c	Single Copy.....5c
In Clubs of 5 or more per Year.....75c	Sample Copies Free
	Foreign Postage 52c Extra.

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THE COMMONER, Lincoln, Neb

The sweet girl graduate is now thinking about a dress for her address.

It seems that Miss Bird was not inclined to be hampered by the bars of a Standard Oil cage.

The "Allison compromise" reminds us very much of the one Russia made with Japan at Portsmouth.

If the merit system prevailed in the senate there would be a sudden change in the make-up of that body.

President Cassatt seems to have been deceived by the fact that the agents employed to do various illegal things actually did them.

"There are things that might be worse than a democratic house," says Senator Aldrich. Of course. Just think of a house made up of Aldriches.

A lot of g. o. p. organs that have said mean things about the "muck rakers" very naturally applauded the president's special message, which was of itself a pretty good specimen of what these organs are pleased to call "muck raking."

The Philadelphia Evening Telegraph rushes wildly to the defense of President Roosevelt and Senator Lodge and severely censures Senator Tillman and ex-Senator Chandler. The Philadelphia Telegraph's office is on Chestnut street.

The fact that the majority of the canal engineers favored a sea level canal is not going to be allowed to stand in the way of the kind of a canal that will take the longest to build. The gentlemen who adroitly had the site switched to Panama in order to delay the work will take care of all that.

DUTY TO THE HELPLESS

The people of Nebraska are just now interested in the investigation of serious charges against the management of one of the state's asylums for the insane. It is charged that the patients in the Norfolk asylum have been brutally treated on occasions, and the governor is making inquiry into the charges. It too often happens that such charges are suppressed because publicity might hurt some party's political chances. And it too often happens that such charges are brushed aside with the thoughtless remark: "O, there's nothing in it."

Every hint of cruelty or abuse to the helpless wards of the state should be rigidly investigated without loss of time and without fear or favor. The insane are especially helpless and in need of the most thorough care and protection.

tion. The man who would let partisan or personal interest interfere with the duty he owes to these helpless people is not deserving of the name of man, and is unworthy to be entrusted with the business of the public. It is to be hoped that the Nebraska authorities will probe the charges to the bottom, and punish the guilty parties, and punish them to the utmost limit.

THE FOOT-PATH TO PEACE

Henry Van Dyke, professor of English literature at Princeton University, has written many things worthy of preservation. He reveals the secret of happiness in the following beautiful paragraph:

"To be glad of life, because it gives you the chance to love and to work and to play and to look up at the stars; to be satisfied with your possessions, but not contented with yourself until you have made the best of them; to despise nothing in the world except falsehood and meanness and to fear nothing except cowardice; to be governed by your admirations rather than by your disgusts; to covet nothing that is your neighbor's except his kindness of heart and gentleness of manners; to think seldom of your enemies, often of your friends—these are little guide-posts on the foot-path to peace."

AN AWFUL CRIME

The special grand jury which has been in session at Springfield, Missouri, for several weeks investigating the lynching of three negroes April 14, has submitted its report. The grand jury has indicted twenty-two men for participation in the lynching. In its report the grand jury denounces mob law as "an inexcusable crime and a shameful stain on the reputation of any intelligent community." It denounces the act of the Springfield mob as "not only unjustifiable and unlawful, but without reason or excuse." Referring to that mob the report says:

"The lynchers consisted mainly of a crowd of irresponsible, drunken men, who had no respect for law or order, no regard for the rights of others, and who took advantage of the occasion to commit acts of lawlessness that were absolutely barbarous and fiendish, and that these acts were nothing more nor less than the outward exhibitions of their real inward criminality."

The grand jury points out that the woman who it was alleged was the victim of the men lynched, disappeared, and the jury was unable to obtain her testimony. The jury says:

"From what we can learn, however, from other witnesses, it seems at least very doubtful to the jury whether Mrs. Edwards was, in fact, assaulted as alleged at the time. She was in a normal condition physically the next morning, and bore no marks of violence upon her person whatever. These facts, in connection with the further fact that she was at the time a married woman, riding at night with an unmarried man, in a dark, remote and unfrequented portion of town, on a journey to no particular place, so far as we can learn, and that she is a woman whose reputation for virtue and chastity is not good, make it at least doubtful whether her story is worthy of belief. But, conceding that an assault was committed on the woman as told by her at the time, we have investigated the facts as to the whereabouts of the two victims of the lynching, Duncan and Coker, and from the evidence taken, it is clear that these two negroes could not have been guilty of the alleged assault.

"According to the testimony before us, the alleged assault could not have occurred later than 9:30 o'clock on the night of April 13, and these two men, Duncan and Coker, were at work on that night and did not leave their work earlier than 10 o'clock, and this assault is alleged to have taken place at least a mile from the place where they were at work. For these reasons we believe the two negroes, Duncan and Coker, innocent of such crime."

Governor Folk and the authorities at Springfield are entitled to commendation for pushing the investigation. It will be helpful to the cause of good government everywhere if the men indicted by this grand jury are vigorously prosecuted. The Springfield mob was guilty of an awful crime, and the guilty should be severely punished.

THE EIGHT-HOUR DAY

A. C. Hayden, representing the Carnegie Steel company, appeared recently before the house committee on labor in opposition to the proposed eight-hour law. He said the enactment of the measure would drive every large institution now taking government contracts from that field, would turn over the manufacture of supplies of the government to the small contractor and would increase the cost of the same to the government from 12½ to 25 per cent. The Carnegie company, he said, one time made an experiment in changing its factory method from two shifts of men working twelve hours each to three shifts working eight hours. The result was the product of that factory was decreased 20 per cent.

The really queer thing about this statement is the omission of the claim that the results of two 12-hour shifts could be excelled by working the men one 24-hour shift. That would be the logical conclusion of Mr. Hayden's argument against the 8-hour law. But the facts are all against the representative of the Carnegie Steel company. It is the almost unanimous verdict of sociologists, of the general public and of unprejudiced investigators that the 8-hour day is morally, economically and industrially right. It has been demonstrated time and again that the worker who enjoys the 8-hour day is a better workman, turns out more and better work and is a better citizen than the man who is compelled to work long hours and is thereby deprived of needed rest and recreation and the opportunity to improve his mind.

But there is another phase of this question which Mr. Hayden does well to ignore. The steel industry, of all industries, is benefited by the protective tariff. That tariff is advocated on the ground that it is a "protection to American workmen." What sort of "protection" is it that compels a man to toil twelve hours a day in a dirty, foul-smelling, dangerous steel mill? The chief trouble about the "protection" afforded by the tariff is that it is not equitably distributed. The employes in the steel mill are merely "protected" in their right to work twelve hours, while the owners of the mill are "protected" in the privilege of extracting as large a profit as the traffic will bear. As a result the "protected" American steel worker works twelve hours, lives on partial rations, is forced to put his children to work before they have acquired even the rudiments of an education and can look forward only to a life of never-ending toil for himself and his children. On the other hand, the men who are so vociferous in their demands for the "protection of the American workman" live in palaces, have cottages at the sea shore, devote millions to debauching courts and legislatures in their own selfish interests and set at defiance every law of decency and morality without fear of being called to account.

If the tariff really protects the worker why not let the fact be known in a shortening of the hours of labor, a betterment of the conditions surrounding his work, better wages, better opportunities for his children and a brighter outlook for the future of himself and those dependent upon him.

ASHAMED OF HIS "INNOCENCE"

Newspapers generally have printed a New York dispatch as follows:

"The story is told in Wall street that President Roosevelt's message was read to Henry H. Rogers, of the Standard Oil company, by his son, H. H. Rogers, Jr. Young Mr. Rogers had just read that the company had been obtaining \$750,000 a year through secret rebates on a total business of 23,000,000 barrels of refined oil, each barrel containing fifty gallons. This would figure out a great deal less than a mill a gallon. 'My dear Harry,' remarked Mr. Rogers, 'that is not even petit larceny and I am almost ashamed of my innocence.'"

Said in jest, to be sure. But if the stealings of the Standard Oil trust were no more than \$750,000 a year, the Rogers and the Rockefellers would unquestionably be ashamed of their "innocence." It may be that all has not been told with respect to the rebate proposition. It may be that the profits through rebates do not by any means include all of the illegitimate income of the Standard Oil trust. Certainly the enormous wealth of "the system" has not been made possible on a \$750,000 income.

It will occur to a great many people that it is time for the administration to begin in a serious way the task of backing its words by its deeds.