

# The Commoner

ISSUED WEEKLY

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## MR. BRYAN AT HOME

Mr. Bryan, accompanied by Mrs. Bryan and daughter Grace, arrived at New York in the afternoon of Thursday, August 30. An informal reception was given at the Victoria hotel, followed by an address by Mr. Bryan at Madison Square Garden in the evening.

The program outlined for Mr. Bryan is about as follows: Friday afternoon, August 31, he is to be given a public reception at New Haven, Conn., and Friday evening he will be given a reception at Bridgeport, Conn. Saturday, September 1, he is to visit Jersey City, N. J., and other New Jersey cities, returning to New York Saturday evening, where he will take part in a dinner given by newspaper men.

Mr. Bryan will remain in the east Sunday, September 2, and Monday, September 3, when he will leave for Chicago, reaching there Tuesday, September 4. In Chicago he will be entertained in the afternoon and evening of September 4, by the Jefferson and Iroquois clubs. He will reach his home in Lincoln in the afternoon of Wednesday, September 5, where he will be given a reception by his immediate neighbors. The reception at Lincoln will take place at 7 o'clock, on the state house grounds.

Mr. Bryan will remain at his home, Fairview, for several days and on September 11 he will be given a reception at St. Louis. On September 12 he will go to Louisville, Ky., and September 13 to Cincinnati to participate in the receptions given in those cities.

“The president is still in favor of tariff revision,” declares Governor Cummins of Iowa. With the accent on the “still.”

The Stensland bank failure again calls attention to the fact that bank inspectors too often neglect the little detail of inspection.

Mr. Rockefeller is having his likeness painted in oil. “And we’ll have to pay for the oil,” mournfully complains the Johnstown Democrat.

An American railroad builder is now talking of building a railroad to the pole. This is the first real assurance that the pole is reachable.

“We will accept the new rate law without a fight,” says a prominent railroad magnate. Now we see where the Aldrich amendments come in.

Mr. Fairbanks should be closely watched by the Cannon boomers. Mr. Fairbanks might endeavor to replace the Cannon hot air with a few icy blasts.

A North Carolina lyncher has been sentenced to fifteen years’ imprisonment. This is a new, but most effective method of discouraging recourse to lynch law.

Following are extracts from bulletins issued by the democratic congressional committee:

The express companies form about as complete a monopoly as could be organized. They have divided up the territory among them and do not compete over the same lines or within the same area. Their operations extend over 158,000 miles of railroad and there are only four of the them—the Adams, the American, the United States and the Wells Fargo. These are said to do 90 per cent of all the express business and they also exercise control over some of the small companies outside of their exclusive fields, but having connection with them. This virtual monopoly of the express business has been under no sort of control, but will now, like the railroads, have to file their schedule of rates and make account of their business to the interstate commerce commission, so we shall soon know more about these close corporations and may hope to have their exorbitant rates modified to a reasonable extent. The express companies are common carriers, as the railroads are and with whom they are closely allied. The reports of the railroads for 1904 shows that the express companies paid the railroads \$41,000,000, which is said to be about fifty per cent of their gross earnings. That there is a close alliance between the railroads and the express companies is shown, as several directors of each are directors or officers of railroad companies. There is a strong suspicion that when the inside affairs of the express companies are exposed that it will be found that large amounts of money have been paid to republican campaign funds and for lobbying purposes to prevent hostile legislation, such as the life insurance companies have been exposed in doing.

The disagreement with Germany over our lack of reciprocity on tariff concessions is leading to complications that may bring on a tariff war with that country. The German ambassador on July 31, according to the Washington Star, delivered a virtual ultimatum to the department of state that, as President Roosevelt has receded from his agreement to urge congress to reciprocate, in return for the concession of the minimum tariff that the maximum tariff will be imposed by Germany. This action by the German government was evidently brought about by the publication of the agreement between President Roosevelt and the republican leaders of the congressional campaign, to make the issue of the campaign on the “standpat” policy. The German emperor may not be as good a poker player as President Roosevelt, but he understands the game enough to know what “standing pat” means, and thinks that a public declaration of continuing the present tariff policy, is entirely inconsistent with keeping the agreement to induce congress to reciprocate with Germany in return for the concession of the minimum tariff. This ultimatum will bring matters to a climax, unless President Roosevelt can induce the German emperor to believe that the Oyster Bay agreement with the republican leaders is nothing but a part of the intricate political game he has to play to prevent a tariff war between rival republican factions. But to the people of the United States it is a much more serious matter, a large and lucrative export business with Germany is threatened with extinction, for the maximum tariff rates, now proposed, are so high as to be prohibitive and were so intended to be. The question is, will our farmers endorse this republican “standpat” policy that is destroying the markets abroad for their surplus products and at the same time, by fostering trusts at home, has increased the cost of what the farmers buy nearly one half?

From the meagre reports of the doings of the Panama commission most of them, especially our \$10,000 a year secretary, seem to spend their time on trips to and from Panama on the government ships where everything is furnished free by the taxpayers. This make the water fly, if not the dirt, and is cheaper than living on shore.

The whole tariff issue turns on whether the people of the United States will decide to continue paying high prices for all they buy and continue to add to the enormous profits of the protected trusts. There can be no dispute that the cost of living has increased 48 per cent since the present tariff law was enacted. Every housekeeper knows this is true from personal experience, it

does not require Dun’s index figures to verify this large increase in prices. It is also now acknowledged by the republican leaders that the trusts sell their products cheaper abroad than to our own people. It is also certain that wages and incomes of the workingmen, small tradesmen, clerks and wage earners generally have not increased in like proportion to the increased cost of living, for whereas it now takes \$1.48 to buy what cost \$1 in 1897 incomes have only increased on the average 14 per cent, so that if a wage earner was getting in 1897 \$15 a week, he now gets \$17.10, if he has received the average increase. The increased cost of what he buys is nearly half as much again, not including rent. How much rent has increased can be settled by each individual for himself. In most of the large cities rents have fully kept pace with the increased cost of living and the cost of building materials has followed the general trend of prices. In some small cities and in villages rents have not increased in the same proportion, but wages there have also not increased as much.

The voters of the United States in each congressional district will have to decide, when they vote next fall, which party best represents their interests. The republicans stand pat and will not revise the tariff in any particular. They point to trust high prices as an evidence of the prosperity the tariff has produced and they keep discreetly silent about the much less increase of salaries and wages. The democrats are pledged to revise the tariff by greatly reducing the excessive rates that now shelter the trusts. That would result in a reduction of high trust prices, because if the trusts did not reduce prices, importations of foreign goods would come in and compete with the products of the trusts. The reduction in the cost of living would virtually be an increase of salaries and wages, because the money earned would buy more, or it would take less money to provide for the necessities of a family or person. The wise voter, who investigates the tariff issue, unless he is one of the protected class, is certain to decide that the democratic policy is best for his pocketbook.

The most partisan republican newspapers of which the St. Louis Globe-Democrat is a shining example are seizing with avidity the fact that the cotton mills of New England have raised the wages of their employes five to fifteen per cent. Of course the fifteen per cent increase is for the officers of the cotton mills and the five per cent for the workingmen and working women. As an indication of how little wages the cotton operatives are paid, the June issue of the Massachusetts Labor Bulletin contains the results of a personal inquiry concerning what is called the distribution of wealth. That inquiry was intended to include certain classes of women, workers embracing for the most part the better paid occupations. As many of the cotton weavers are women, what they are paid will show the necessity for an increase of wages, especially as the cost of living has increased 48 per cent. The report of the above mentioned inquiry shows that women weavers were paid \$410 a year, or \$1.36 a day and these are the highest paid operatives except a few men who manage and care for the machinery. Some of the employes are paid as little as 50 cents a day. Five or even ten per cent increase will hardly leave these workers anything after paying their bills, in these times of high prices and trust prosperity. The republicans will have to exhibit a better showing than this to stop the revolt of the working people against the republican party.

The Canadian government, to prevent the “dumping” of American trust products, especially those of the steel trust, has increased the tariff duty on any product sold cheaper there than in the country from which it is exported. Yet the republicans have been trying to make the voters believe that our trust products are not sold cheaper abroad than at home.

Mr. Rockefeller says his fortune is less than one-third of a billion dollars. However much his fortune may be, he does not pay any more for the support of the United States government than any ordinary man. In fact, the tariff and internal revenue taxation rather favors the buyer of the highest quality of goods. And yet the republican campaign for congress is to be run on the basis of letting well enough alone and “standing pat” on the plundering tariff that protects the trusts.