

# The Commoner.

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### WASTED ENERGY

"Uncle Joe" Cannon is seventy years of age. A newspaper dispatch referring to "Uncle Joe's" stumping tour, says: "Here is one day's itinerary for a seventy-year old man, which the speaker covered last Tuesday: Left Kansas City in the morning; received a committee of citizens at Atchison, Kan.; received another committee of admirers at Leavenworth; arrived at St. Joseph, Mo., spoke to 2,000 people for two hours; toured St. Joseph in an automobile; visited the Benton club and met citizens; rode forty miles to Cameron; made another two hours' speech; boarded the train at night and started for Iowa."

This is a very sprightly record for a "seventy year young" man. It is a pity that such industry and energy could not be put to better use than in an effort to persuade the American people to the hope that they can secure relief from corporation oppression at the hands of a party that derives its campaign funds from the oppressors. They can not do it any more than they could brew blood out of a turnip or construct a silk purse from the material provided in a pig's ear.

### AN IMMUNITY BATH HOUSE

James R. Garfield, United States commissioner of corporations, recently delivered an address before the New York University. In introducing the speaker, Chancellor McCracken called him "a mighty hunter of corporations." The Wall Street Journal rebukes the chancellor, saying: "The term was ill chosen. Nobody wants to hunt corporations, and such hunting should never be necessary. If the corporation is honestly conducted it has nothing to fear and nothing to conceal."

Chancellor McCracken should have introduced the speaker as "a mighty dispenser of immunity baths." Of course, nobody wants to hunt corporations, but the office of commissioner of corporations was created for the purpose of aiding in the enforcement of law against corporation managers who would violate law. In one conspicuous instance, at least, the office of United States Commissioner of corporations appeared to be transformed into an immunity bath house.

### "STAND BY ROOSEVELT"

Senator Beveridge and some other republican leaders insist that now that the American flag has again been raised on the Island of Cuba, it shall "stay put," and that Cuba must be annexed; but Mr. Roosevelt says that the islanders must be helped to preserve the Cuban republic, and that when order shall have been restored the United States troops must be withdrawn.

Why not "stand by Roosevelt" on this proposition which is thoroughly in line with American principles.



THE POLICY OF PROTECTION----FOR WHOM?

## Railroad Question in the South

Mr. Bryan has recently made a tour of the southern states and in Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana he presented the dual plan of government ownership advanced two years ago and again presented at Madison Square Garden on the 30th of last August. These were the only southern states which he visited excepting Arkansas, and he did not stop at any point in Arkansas long enough to make an extended speech. His object in discussing the railroad question was not to make converts to the plan presented, but rather to explain it in order that those who desired to consider it might not be misled by the statements of unfriendly newspapers. While the subject was treated incidentally and never at any considerable length, the following summary gives the substance of what he said at various points:

"My object in presenting the dual plan of railroad ownership is not to enter upon a discussion of it in detail but to present the plan so that you may discuss it intelligently if you think it worthy of consideration. Having become convinced of the futility of railroad regulation to protect and safeguard the rights of the people, I announced that conclusion some two years ago. In answer to the charge that I am attempting to force this issue upon the party, it is sufficient to say that when the plan was first proposed just after the St. Louis convention of 1904, I was in a position to speak for myself without being suspected of an attempt to force my views upon anyone. I had just been relieved of the responsibility of leadership by a convention that did not conceal its hostility to me, and if ever a man was in a position to speak for himself and express his own views, I was in such a position. Two years have elapsed since that time—half of

which time has been spent abroad. On my return I delivered a speech discussing public questions. It was necessary to include the railroad question in that speech or to avoid it. If I had attempted to avoid the question, it would have been presented to me by those who knew of my former utterances and no advantage would have been gained either to myself or the party by keeping silent until forced to express myself, but there was no reason for avoiding the question, and I had no thought of remaining silent upon a subject of great and growing importance. Having to express an opinion, I could only express my own opinion, and as no one during my public life has ever asked me to do his thinking for him, I did not think it necessary to consult others as to what I myself should think. According to the democratic theory of government each one thinks for himself, and those who think ought to have the courage to express themselves. If I should try to make my opinion suit others and they should try to make their opinion suit me, neither would be able to find out what the other thought, but if each one does his own thinking and then frankly expresses his opinion, then it is possible to ascertain the will of the majority, and the will of the majority governs.

"A number of things have contributed to convince me of the impossibility of the effectiveness of regulation as applied to railroads, the main thing being the corruption which the railroads have brought into politics. In my own state we tried, some fifteen years ago, to obtain a reduction in railroad rates. After a hard struggle the bill was passed through the legislature, but the governor vetoed it. At the same session the railroads bribed one of the members of the legislature, and as he did not dare to remain