

FROM THE PEOPLE

A. Goodyear, Boston, Mass.—Radical is true, or deeply true. An absolute truth is final. Right to have is right to trade. What warrant has any government to withdraw another person's property, because he chooses to trade? W. D. P. Bliss' Encyclopaedia of Social Reform argues at length for free trade. Cheap labor is apt to be inferior in quality or quantity, etc. Governor J. R. Rogers says trade is beneficial and should not be restrained by taxation. But why not consider the simple right to copy freely involved in-right to life (primarily) or right to have sufficient and trust in the impotence of righteousness to reveal how rightly to procure government funds? Every one ought to see some principle of just taxation or a substitute for it. It certainly is not optional with any government. What there is inalienable right to must not be taxed. No taxation should be, except enough to pay cost of what the people are morally obligated to have and, I suppose, to have supplied for them by the government. Government ownership of minor resources might pay government debts and then substitute taxation altogether.

S. W. Hickox, Wakefield, Neb.—I believe if every democrat would try to get the voters in his precinct out, democracy would win, but when we stay at home and let the corporations give the delegates the choice of the candidates, we are but their slaves. So I would say, democrats attend the primaries, the caucuses and the conventions. Don't fail to vote, and see if you can't persuade at least one of your neighbors to vote for honest government. I am a constant reader of *The Commoner*, and when I can, I give it to my neighbors. Get them in the habit of reading *The Commoner* and you will get them in the habit of voting right. When you find an article in *The Commoner* that particularly appeals to you, cut it out and tack it up where others can read it. You will find lots of good ones. Get the voters to study politics, and they will vote intelligently. As long as the party stands by the principles advocated by Mr. Bryan, you will find me in the ranks ever willing to do all in my power to help carry the party to victory.

A. G. LaGrange, Worthington, Minn.—If the cartoonist of our paper is short of material, I would suggest the following: As the elephant is the exponent of the republican party, or g. o. p., which means the great octopus party, I would suggest that the four legs of the elephant be subdivided into eight tentacles or suckers and that one of these suckers should have for its co-efficient or money-valve, J. P. Morgan, who is doubtless a lineal descendant and heir-at-law of the Morgan, the Ladrone pirate, who infested the high seas three hundred years ago, and J. Dodger Rockefeller for another; Carnegie, the modern Robin Hood, who divides his loot with the people, and so on, and as this is to be a lean year for the g. o. p.'s, let him be drawn in skeleton form.

R. B. Wilson, Emmett, Idaho—I suggest that a public caucus be held preceding the primary in each precinct, at which caucus a long list of planks for a platform be formulated and at the primary each democrat be given a chance not only to choose delegates to represent him at the conventions, but also to approve or disapprove of the various possible or probable planks to be adopted in his party's platform. Six years ago the central committee in Idaho chose the delegates from the various precincts to attend the state convention at which convention a platform was written and published. When the county conventions met they could do nothing but ratify a platform thus made. We have improved enough to hold two primaries, one to choose delegates to a state convention and another later primary to choose delegates to a county nominating convention. Last election the county delegate convention adopted no platform leaving the state convention to write the platform without the people having had an opportunity to express their views. Such procedure does not tend to arouse the enthusiasm of the rank and file. Democracy puts its trust in the people and should encourage a more direct expression of the people. Referring the platform to the people would have the effect of producing an intelligent and enthusiastic constituency just as the referendum would produce an intelligent and patriotic citizenship.

FOR THE SCRAP-BOOK

Life

Life's a game of go and hustle, life's a thing of rush and bustle,
Life's a play of brain and muscle, life's all jump and buzz and whirr;
Life's a game at whose beginning all the world is set a spinning,
That the very thought of winning is itself a splendid spur.

Life's a thing of rough-and-tumble, life's a thing of laugh and grumble,
Life's a thing of grab and fumble, life's a thing of jolt and jar;
Life's a stretch of daisied meadows, life's a place of glints and shadows,
Life's a thing of maids and widows, smiles and tears, and there you are.

Life's a thing of self-styled winners, millionaires and saints and sinners,
Men who have and haven't dimers, thing of riff-raff steal and toil;
Men who go their ways a-laughing, men who go their ways a-chaffing,
Men who go their ways a-quaffing, men whose only thought is spoil.

Maidens wise and maidens witty, maidens beautiful and pretty,
Painted women—O the pity! always changing yet the same;
Thing of low and high endeavor, thing of push and pull forever,
Game for dolts and players clever, thing of love and glee and shame.

But who plays the game a-loving, lifting, helping, never shoving,
Laughing, singing, turtle-doving through its jars and outs and ins,
With a wife and little laddie or wee lass to call him daddie,
Doesn't do so very badly—he's the chap who truly wins.

—Judd Mortimer Lewis, in *American Magazine*.

The River of Rest

A beautiful stream is the River of Rest;
The still, wide waters sweep clear and cold,
A tall mast crosses a star in the West;
A white sail gleams in the West world's gold,
It leans to the shore of the River of Rest—
The lily-lined shores of the River of Rest.

The boatman rises, he reaches a hand;
He knows you well, he will steer you true,
And far, so far from all ills upon land,
From hates, from fates that pursue and pursue;
Far over the lily-lined River of Rest—
Dear mystical, magical River of Rest.

A storied, sweet dream is this River of Rest;
The souls of all time keep its ultimate shore;
And journey you east, or journey you west,
Unwilling or willing, surefooted, or sore,
You surely will come to this River of Rest—
This beautiful, beautiful River of Rest.

—Joaquin Miller.

A Song in the Night

Sing, oh sing, for the night is dark, and the dawn-
ing tarries long,
And the woe of the land of shadowing wing is
stilled by the sound of song.
There is never a light on the land tonight, there
is never a star in the sky,
Only the glance of the lightning's lance, and the
white waves leaping high.

The seabirds swing on tireless wing,
The waves, with rhythmic beat,
Forevermore along the shore
Their world-old song repeat,
And borne on winds afar,
The silver echoes fill
The vault of heaven from star to star,
The earth from hill to hill.

Sing, oh sing, for the night is past, the sun shines
over the sea,
And the heart of the world is a song of love and
hope for the days to be;
The terror that flies through the midnight skies
and the powers of the dark are gone;
Till the music fills the echoing hills, heart of my
heart, sing on!

—Longman's Magazine.

THE PRIMARY PLEDGE

Extracts from letters received at *The Commoner* office follow:

R. S. Brawl, Kansas City, Kan.—I send you nine primary pledge signatures.

W. S. Menning, Kansas City, Kan.—Herewith find thirty-five signatures to the primary pledge.

Joseph Horton, Camden, Ohio—I send you eighteen more signatures to the primary pledge. Please send each one a copy of *The Commoner*.

Earl Wintermute, Western, Neb.—I am a new subscriber to your paper. I just saw the primary pledge and I gladly send in mine.

William Burke, Rochester, N. Y.—Find enclosed list of primary pledge signatures. Best wishes for *The Commoner's* success.

As this copy of *The Commoner* may be read by some one not familiar with the details of the primary pledge plan, it is necessary to say that according to the terms of this plan every democrat is asked to pledge himself to attend all of the primaries of his party to be held between now and the next democratic national convention, unless unavoidably prevented, and to secure a clear, honest and straight-forward declaration of the party's position on every question upon which the voters of the party desire to speak. Those desiring to be enrolled can either write to *The Commoner* approving the object of the organization and asking to have their names entered on the roll, or they can fill out and mail the blank pledge, which is printed on page 14.

A GROSVENOR CLAIM

(Continued from Page 5)

During all that time we have been prosperous." *The New York World* called this "cold, colossal and impudent falsification of history," and said that it must have astonished those among his hearers whose memories were more than one year long. Then this *New York* paper gave Mr. Reed these interesting reminders:

"The panic of 1873, under republican rule and after twelve years of high tariff taxation, was the most disastrous and the period of business depression for five years thereafter was the most severe of any in our history. It was officially estimated that 3,000,000 workmen were out of employment. Bankruptcy was widespread. A tidal wave of ruin and distress swept over the country.

"From 1881 to 1886, under two republican tariffs, there were labor strikes involving 22,304 establishments and 1,323,203 workmen. Of these strikes 9,439 were for an increase of wages and 4,344 against reductions of wages.

"Mr. Reed's party tinkered the tariff in 1883. In that year there were 9,184 business failures, involving \$172,874,000. In 1884 there were 10,968 failures, involving \$226,343,000. In the next year, still under the republican tariff and currency laws, there was a general business depression. More than 1,000,000 men were out of employment.

"In 1890 the McKinley bill was passed, and there were 10,673 failures in that year, and 12,394 the next, with liabilities in each year amounting to nearly \$200,000,000. The tariff was raised to nearly 50 per cent, but wages either stood still or declined, while the prices of necessaries advanced. The protected manufacturers kept all their 'bonus' as usual.

"Tramps and trusts, the twin products of a monopolists' tariff, were practically unknown in this country until we had endured uninterrupted republican rule for a dozen years.

"The worst labor troubles, the bloodiest riots, the most destructive strikes, the most brutal lockouts ever known in any country have occurred here under the high tariffs, bought, made and paid for by the contributors of the republican campaign funds."

It might be well for *Commoner* readers to clip this statement from *The Commoner* and have it in convenient form to show to their republican neighbors who may have been deceived by the Grosvenor claims.