

The Commoner

ISSUED WEEKLY

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The "standpatters" are in danger of becoming the "sit tighters."

Former Senator Burton goes to jail for doing in a small way what a lot of other senators have been doing in a large way for a quarter of a century.

Men who profit through the operation of high tariff schedules will be too slow to revise the tariff in the interests of the consumers who have to pay the profit.

Having made a deal that will put several hundred million dollars in his pocket Mr. James J. Hill can afford to sit around and take a pessimistic view of the future.

The Chicago Tribune is calling the school board a "lot of boodlers." Can it be possible the board is compelling the Tribune to pay up on that school property lease?

Sir Thomas Lipton says American women are the best in the world. And that entitles Sir Thomas to the cup for discernment, even if he cannot win the yacht cup.

How it must pain Senator Aldrich, Senator Platt, Senator Depew and Senator Penrose to see the disgrace cast upon the grave and dignified senate by Burton of Kansas!

The price of denatured alcohol explains why Senator Aldrich was not frightened at the prospects of the Standard Oil company being compelled to suffer undue competition.

Senator Dolliver gravely informs us that there is no lumber trust. The amount of valuable misinformation given the public by republican spellbinders is something great.

It is quite evident that Mr. Rhoe of the Chicago American base ball team could carry Cook county unanimously for almost any old office he might condescend to run for.

The Milwaukee Sentinel endorses Hamilton and Lincoln in the same breath. The political acrobatics of the Milwaukee Sentinel are calculated to bring additional fame to Milwaukee.

Secretary Wilson has agreed to let the packers label their steamed beef as "roast beef." He calls it a "concession to the packers." The pauperized beef packers are sadly in need of some concessions.

Noting that Mr. Howard Gould is angry because he has a Chinese brother-in-law, the Houston Post sagely observes that he ought to be thankful it isn't Harry Lehr. There's genuine optimism for you.

The Filipino who sold the tombstone over his mother-in-law's grave in order to get money to feed his favorite game cock should hasten over to Pennsylvania and become a cog in the republican state machine.

Speaker Cannon says the president "co-operated with the senate and house in the matter of rate regulation." It is easy to imagine that Speaker Cannon winked at Senators Aldrich, Foraker and Dick when he said it.

Count Boni de Castellane, bounced from the French chamber for fraud, has been re-elected. What a queer lot those Frenchmen are, to be sure. Over here we save time by merely letting them remain in from their first election.

Mr. Rockefeller says that if the newspapers knew him better they would not say such mean things about him. If they knew him better they might be saying meaner things. Mr. Rockefeller should not fly in the face of providence.

The report that several senators have formed a cabal for the purpose of suppressing Senator LaFollette would, if true, indicate that several senators are slated for the experience of the bull that tried to butt the locomotive off the bridge.

Third Assistant Postmaster General Madden urges the appointment of a commission to investigate the second-class mail privileges. He says the present system is a burden on the government. Yes, but think what a snap it is for the railroads.

"Scotch humor" is well illustrated by the Edinburgh professor who naively announces that he favors spelling reform and in the same breath makes known the fact that Mr. Carnegie has given the professor's university a little matter of \$50,000.

Governor Fletcher of Vermont is likely to be adjudged guilty of treason by the managers of the g. o. p. He recently declared that "we cannot create prosperity merely by legislation." If that isn't treason to the republican tariff theory nothing is.

Mr. Harriman and Mr. Fish are struggling for possession of the Illinois Central railroad. The battle will cost a pile of money, but the contestants know right where to turn and get it. The people also know, having had previous experience.

PRIMARY PLEDGE

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.

Primary pledges have been sent in in numbers as follows: William H. Sage, Homersville, N. Y., 22; John McCarthy, New York City, N. Y., 12; G. W. Adkins, Crete, W. Va., 35; J. J. Estes, Hurricane, W. Va., 55; Joe Johns, Erbacon, W. Va., 35; M. E. Rhodes, Huron, Tenn., 25.

W. A. Manchester, Roscoe, Ohio—Enclosed please find 16 good democrats. This make 52 names I have sent in. Let the good work go on. I am between 70 and 80 years old and you can't expect me to get around very fast. Please send me a blank or two and I will pick up a man now and then.

David P. Fry, M. D., Hedgesville, W. Va.—Enclosed find primary pledge of 60 signatures. Only four democrats refused to sign and three of those were really not democrats, but Palmer and Bucknerites. All democrats seem determined and anxious for the next scrap with the public pirates.

G. W. Hyatt, Sylvatus, Va.—Please find herewith primary pledges with 34 signatures, all good rock-ribbed democrats of the Jeffersonian type. Long may The Commoner and its editor live to carry the glad tidings of democracy to the voters of the United States.

J. F. Puchheit, Lancaster, Pa.—Enclosed

please find 35 signatures to the primary pledge. I am so busy that I have but little time, but if you will send me another blank I will try to fill it as soon as possible.

George Ray Batt, Annapolis, Sonoma County, Cal.—I herewith enclose 20 names who have signed the primary pledge. Stewart's Point precinct is very large and most of the voters have to go ten and fifteen miles to vote, but they generally get there. I was sent as a delegate to the county convention at Santa Rosa. It was the first convention I ever attended. Although the once beautiful city weeps in ruins, caused by the mighty earthquake on the 18th of April, and we all stopped to drop a tear for the dead, yet above all men and women in that convention were filled with the spirit of true democracy; all cheered for the man of peace, our glorious leader, William J. Bryan. I shall never forget one brave man in that convention—a Mr. Reed, who lost in the earthquake two beautiful daughters and a grandchild. There I beheld him, with his quiet duty, his locks of white hair, this good earnest worker in the cause of the people. Yes, the democrats of California are in the fight for a cleaner, a brighter and a happier day when the wrong must be turned down and out. I am deeply in love with The Commoner from first to last and shall soon send on more subscriptions.

GUY R. SPENCER

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work in teaching and rousing the public conscience and forcing legislation that will open a good many people's eyes to their own and their neighbor's misdeeds. But the battle has only begun. The great breeding place of the graft stegomyia, the principle or legislation for the pocketbook, has hardly been touched. The great tariff question is still argued on the proposition: Is it profitable? Not on the principle: Is it right? Great statesmen still rise in their places in the ruling body of this nation and oppose publicly and unblushingly, probably believing themselves in the rectitude of their actions and oppose right and just measures because the codfish industry might be hurt, the cigar and tobacco business be injured, or the railroad interests might suffer, the express companies lose a few thousand dollars, or the banking fraternity be unable to rake in quite so many shekels as heretofore.

"Others champion with might and main bills of plunder, ostensibly to protect the merchant marine from losing the dollars that the ships of some other nation are honestly earning, or to make the currency expansive enough to save a few gamblers from the pit of their own digging. No question of right or wrong, but of dollars and cents. From cover to cover the Congressional Record is full of dollar argument, with just enough high-sounding patriotism and morality to give it flavor.

"This idea of legislation for the financial advancement of the nation, instead of for the moral betterment, is largely responsible for the widespread worship of the dollar. We have almost come to believe that our governing bodies exist largely for the purpose of looking after business and finance, and that legislative and official action should of right be largely influenced by its effect on the finances of the citizens instead of controlled entirely by considerations of right and wrong. President Roosevelt's exposure of the horrible practices of the beef trust raised a howl of protest from a great many honest men, because it injured the business, not only of the guilty packers, but of the innocent stockmen and dependent industries. They would have smothered the report, a benefit to the whole country, a godsend in its probable results, merely because somebody 'stood to lose' some money in the event of its publication! Again the right and wrong of the issue entirely overshadowed by the almighty dollar."

The representative cartoons by Mr. Spencer which we publish tell their own story and drive home certain facts very important for the people to understand, more impressively than would labored editorials.

Mr. Spencer is only 28 years of age. Before him we trust there may be many fruitful years. He has it in his power to do a great work for civic integrity and democratic progress in the great battle that is now opening between the people and the interests, between free institutions and plutocracy; and unless we are greatly mistaken he will acquit himself worthily in as noble a cause as man has ever striven for, for he is under the compulsion of moral idealism, as was Thomas Nast when he achieved one of the greatest triumphs for civic righteousness that was won in the nineteenth century.