

Letters From the People

G. W. Green, Rogersville, Tenn.—Our present civil service law is a disgrace to a free republic. Why not repeal that law and thus give every man an equal chance? When men get into office and hold the same for life, as they now do under the civil service law, it is an injustice on other free citizens of the republic. This is especially true in the postoffice department. I favor a policy that will allow a man to hold an appointive office only as long as the appointing congressman serves. That would give all an equal show. And that is what we and our fathers fought for. I am a republican, an old soldier, and too old to enter the postal service, but I insist upon everybody having an equal show to secure employment. As matters now stand this equal show is not afforded.

Karl Paine, Boise, Idaho.—In the last issue of The Commoner under the heading "The Trial at Boise" you have quoted from the Great Falls Daily Tribune on the case of the State of Idaho versus Haywood and others. The article reads in part: "The officers of the state in Idaho from first to last of the preliminary proceedings in this case have done their level best to create the impression in candid minds that they are actuated by unfair motives in this trial \* \* \* One of these measures is the passage by the last legislature of a law that reduces by one-half the number of challenges allowed the defense in criminal cases." That Governor Gooding by repeated interviews and speeches has rendered it impossible for the prisoners to have a fair and impartial trial, according to the theory of the law, can not be gainsaid. That by the help of the politicians, the fools and fanatics, and the president of the United States, the governor succeeded in making this (a plain murder case) a political issue in the last campaign, has become a portion of the (grotesque) history of this state; and that the stigma of "undesirable citizens" was prejudicial to the defendants was proved during the selection of the jury to try Haywood. But this is all the truth the article contains. Its fling at Senator Borah places the Tribune on the unfair list. If, as stated in the article, Mr. Borah is under indictment this fact will hardly militate against the defendants in the murder case, and the senator, as well as they, is entitled to the presumption of innocence. Not an officer in the state (the governor excepted) has said or done anything that is open to criticism. On the other hand the prisoners have been treated with unusual kindness and consideration. The last legislature did not reduce "the number of challenges allowed the defense," but it provided that in all criminal cases prosecution and defense should each be entitled to ten peremptory challenges, thereby increasing the number formerly belonging to the state from five to ten. There is a deep-seated determination to punish every person implicated in the murder of Frank Steunenberg, but the disposition to give the prisoners an impartial trial is just as pronounced. Because of the splendid citizenry of this county justice will be done to the prisoners in spite of the governor and the theory of the law.

J. W. Thornton, Douglas, Ariz.—All admit that a state of wonderful prosperity now prevails in the United States and all concede that sooner or later it must be followed by a period of reaction and "hard times." Why? Nobody has ever given a reason for the coming of hard times in a country that raises enough foodstuff to supply not only its own needs but go far toward the feeding of the hundreds of millions of Europe besides; a country that not only makes ample clothing for home consumption but exports hundreds of millions of dollars worth annually. The United States has ample timber supply for its own use and ships a large surplus abroad. But why go on? Our resources and producing powers are known, but it is not known why the energy we put into the developing of them makes us rich for ten years and poor for the next five. There are in the periods of reaction millions of pairs of shoes stored in warehouses for which there is no sale, yet the people go barefooted. Bumper wheat crops are raised but the people starve. There are millions of suits of warm clothes that some one has earned but the producing classes shiver in their tenements half clad. In hard times millions are

anxious to work but there is no employer and the great crops that are produced bring hardly the cost of production. Some of the sufferings of the poorer classes during such periods of depression may be attributed to the failure of the workers to lay aside their earnings for a rainy day, but this does not account for the fact that the actual producers of the country's wealth are the greatest sufferers. Nor does it give a reason for such conditions when the earth is filled with fruitfulness and the warehouses with all that the hive has produced to make the nation warm and comfortable. These periods of depression seem to come without any regard to reason. For instance, the financiers of Europe are predicting a reaction in the United States, and John D. Rockefeller and others are echoing the prophecy. Mr. Rockefeller has gone so far as to suggest that the government prepare to give the idle millions employment on public works of the country, such as roads, in order to keep them from starvation. These same millions are those who have produced a large part of the surplus necessities of life that are to lie stored and unavailing during the hard times that are coming. Why? Why are the hard times to come in the midst of plenty, and why should the workers in the hive starve when they may no longer work? There is both more reason and more humanity in the political economy of a hive of bees or a nest of ants. While man has been learning wisdom why has not some political economist devised a cure for this crude law of distribution? With all the business sense supposed to be possessed by the great financiers of the land it is not on record that one of them in this day and time ever attempted to offer a solution. There is a larger per capita of circulating medium in the country now than ever before in its history. There are more railroads, better cultivated farms and more land being cultivated than ever before, producing more necessities of life per capita. There is a greater demand for the products of mills, mines and fields, and yet all declare that hard times are coming. What everybody says must be true, but why? Over production is no reason why the producers should starve and shiver with cold. A great crop of corn is no reason why it should be burned as fuel, for it is needed and badly needed elsewhere for food, and there are plenty of railroads to transport it to the points of distress where the producers of other necessities have earned it ten times over by producing other things equally as necessary which they can not eat, but for which the producers of the corn are suffering. The coal miner suffers for bread in those times and the farmer suffers for coal and burns his corn, of which he has more than he can eat and for which there is no market to yield him the price of coal and clothing. The banks are full of money, the bins are full of coal, the barns are full of corn, the warehouses are full of clothing, there are thousands of miles of railroads over which the exchanges are supposed to be made. Yet the people starve and freeze and no economist ever offers a solution, and no financier who has amassed the wealth of the land suggests a remedy. Do these people skilled in finance know a remedy? Is the remedy that the ant in his hole and the bee in the hive have found out beyond the superior wisdom of man, or is it that the superior among us are utterly selfish and heartless? Why should the producers of wealth starve and die while the products of his toil rot?

"Buckeye," Elsinore, Cal.—Recently a copy of The Commoner came to this deponent through the kindness of another, and has been read with pleasure. So far as I know your platform, it meets my approval. I have for many years been an anti-saloon republican and have never voted the democratic ticket as such, but have voted for some who were democrats. Lately I have been a great admirer of the president, and had about made up my mind that if the rank and file of the republican party did not support him in his efforts to cleanse the Augean stable, that hereafter I would vote the socialist ticket, but now think, if living at the next presidential election, will vote the democratic ticket. In one thing the president has greatly disappointed me—in using his "big stick" on the democrats of Idaho in their late battle with the Mormon hierarchy. There is one question I would like The Commoner to answer. In a talk with a citizen not long since as to why the convicted lawbreakers of the trusts had not been sent to jail, but only fined, I was asked if I did not remember that before these prosecutions began that Steve Elkins introduced a bill in the senate which was passed, and signed by the president, debarring the courts from sending such criminals (the officers of the trusts) if con-

victed to jail, permitting them only to be fined. Now is that true? Would the president sign a bill that would tie his own hands in that manner? If so we would doubt his earnestness in the matter of reform. I am loath to take so much of your time, but there are several republicans who would like to know the truth in this matter. (The Elkins law removed the imprisonment penalty for violation of the anti-rebate law.—Ed.)

THIS MIGHT DO

A republican newspaper finds fault with Mr. Bryan because he lectures at Chautauquas. Mr. Bryan might conciliate the aforesaid republican by becoming the attorney for a trust, but the lecture field is more congenial.

CHILDHOOD

Do you recall the olden days,  
The days of childhood, when  
We wandered down the rosy ways,  
Beyond the haunts of men?  
You used to wear your golden hair  
In pigtails down your back;  
Your face, I can recall for fair,  
Was always streaked with black.

Your cheeks were pink as pink could be,  
And O, so blue your eyes;  
When I looked in them I could see  
The glint of summer skies.  
And I remember very well  
Your lips were like the rose;  
And one thing else—ought I to tell?—  
You had a leaky nose.

I bring to mind your little ways  
That fascinated me—  
Your hesitancy, timid gaze,  
Yet wild as any bee.  
And I recall how you in fright  
Would have to sit and rub  
Your bare brown feet when came the night,  
In that old fashioned tub.

That, dear heart, was years ago,  
And things have changed since then;  
We're man and woman now and know  
The ways of world and men.  
But nothing ever can deface  
Those memories, I vow—  
(Excuse me, dear, but your sweet face  
Is streaked with black right now!)  
—Will F. Griffin in Milwaukee Sentinel.

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