

## The Commoner.

ISSUED WEEKLY.

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THE COMMONER, Lincoln, Neb.

Better lay in your supply of oil before the raise comes.

Governor Glenn has shown what may be accomplished by going after the men higher up.

Unintentionally Senator Foraker has given the Taft boom quite a goodly lot of inflation.

The Korean delegates to the peace conference are coming on to the United States to find it.

And now Mr. Foraker feels like going out and Brownsvilling the Ohio republican state committee.

George Ade says he is making money faster than he can spend it. What, writing fables again, George?

Judge Lindsey says that Mr. Guggenheim bought a senatorship. Judge Lindsey is not a purveyor of news.

Those inventions for the prevention of naval accidents seem to be in need of sub-inventions that will make the originals work.

Those darting shadows down east are caused by Judge Jeter Pritchard wig-wagging Washingtonward for assistance in letting go.

Early in September the republicans of Oklahoma will swallow a good constitution with wry faces, and at the same time declare that they like it.

It seems that even a railroad president prefers peace to legal turmoil, especially when he would have to whistle through jail bars while the turmoil proceeded outside.

The Medical Journal declares that the soap bubble is the thinnest thing in the world. Huh! Did the Medical Journal ever measure the thinness of the average tariff standpatter argument?

It is said that "strictly modern political methods prevailed during the recent Philippine campaign." What Filipino Cortelyou went out with the fryingpan, and what Filipino Bliss accepted the money and paid it out?

The advocates of a ship subsidy will have a hard time explaining why Uncle Sam has to violate his own shipping laws and hire a vessel flying the British emblem to use in the government's Panama coasting trades business.

MR. ROOSEVELT'S "ILLOGICAL STOP"  
MR. TAFT'S "WIDE MARGIN" .....

The Denver News dealt in a particularly interesting way with the speeches recently delivered by Messrs. Roosevelt and Taft. Expressing approval of some portions of Mr. Taft's address the News says:

"But there are some things about that speech which we do not like, some things which make us believe we could pick out quite as good a president without going as far east to do it. For one thing, Mr. Taft shows himself a bureaucrat. He seems to love a commission for its own sake. Now the News has always acted in the belief that a commission was, after all, a makeshift, a necessary but temporary contrivance to stop a gap while some way was being found of fixing individual responsibility. Instead of having commissions forevermore to control the corporations, the News wants to so amend the laws as to get at the individual back of the corporation and make him stand the penalty of the misdeeds he achieves through corporate machinery.

"Mr. Taft admits that most of the trusts owe their monopolies to illegal acts or to government favors. We go one step farther and declare that they all do. We make again our oft-repeated and never challenged statement that there is not, and can not be, any such thing as a fair monopoly. The rebate does all that Mr. Taft says it does in monopoly making, and more. But there is another important agent to which Mr. Taft does not refer in this connection, and that is the tariff. For, if the rebate is the father of the trusts, the tariff is surely their mother.

"We have been taught to regard Mr. Taft as a champion of tariff reform. It seems we were premature in our rejoicings on that point. The secretary of war declares himself an ardent champion of protection, and while he would be glad to see the tariff revised, the whole republican party must agree on the revision. One might as well look for unanimity of creeds in a congress of religions. If the tariff is to stand till the entire republican party can agree on how to revise it, it will remain forever. Moreover, Mr. Taft shows that the revisions he is after are not such as need keep any present beneficiary awake at night. He would base the tariff on the difference between the cost of production at home and abroad. This would put half our articles on the free list at once if enforced rigidly, but in the next breath Mr. Taft shows that he does not wish it enforced rigidly. He says that in computing this difference we must always leave a 'wide margin' for safety's sake; and he quotes with substantial approval the report of the National Association of Manufacturers—one might say the National Association of Tariff Beneficiaries—to the effect that the present 'margin' is none too wide. So it seems that not only must the tariff await revision until the g. o. p. can agree on what to revise, but that revision must be measured by the wishes of those who benefit by the present scale. How much hope this holds out to the farmer and laborer we would rather not say."

Referring to Mr. Roosevelt's speech the News heartily commends the promise that there will be no "let up" in the prosecution of criminal corporations. It reminds him that "on most of the tasks which have given him his fame he has had a deal better support from the democrats than from the republicans. The News adds:

"But here, as in contemplating the speech of Secretary Taft, the News is struck with the illogical stop that is made, the incompleteness of the doctrines which Roosevelt and his successor have learned so well from the text-books of democracy. We have spoken of our disgust for the persistent egotism of Wall Street, a disgust which it is evident the president shares to the full. But, after all, is the Wall Street man so much to blame for that attitude? He is asking the country to get him out of a hole, that is true. But what has been the unflinching prayer of those who feed at the trough of the sacred tariff, in the temple of the g. o. p.? What about the argument of the full dinner pail? Has not the republican party for forty years preached the doctrine that it is the government's business to insure the prosperity of some citizens? The News is unable to see why what is a patriotic call from the steel manufacturer should be a criminal plea from the broker who deals in the stocks of the steel corporation. Both are crying for government aid. Both assume that it is the government's business to render that aid. Both

estimate the value of justice in terms of cash, and if privilege is worth more in the market, they call for privilege as a right. And why not? The democrat, the follower of Jefferson, can logically object to both the beggar of Wall Street and the beggar of Pittsburg. It is the doctrine of democracy that prosperity is but an incident to good government, that the business of government is simply and solely to insure justice, and that if this is done prosperity will take care of itself. But we confess we can not see the logic of handing bonuses to Pittsburg and brickbats to Wall Street at one and the same time. Not that we pity Wall Street, however—not a bit.

"And there is another point on which we can not agree with the president. It is a point on which we have taken sharp issue with him many times before, and shall probably have to do so again. We refer to his notion that he has the right to play pitch and toss with the constitution and make hay of states' rights if the object in his mind is a beneficent one, which we are perfectly ready to grant that it is. We quote: 'It seems to me that such questions as national sovereignty and states' rights need to be treated, not empirically nor academically, but from the standpoint of the interests of the people as a whole.'

"And, of course, Mr. Roosevelt thinks himself entirely competent to ascertain those interests.

"We really must object. We have said many times before that we have every confidence in the honesty of the president's intentions. But we do not believe that he or any other man has a vision so clear that it can be trusted to lay the course of the ship of state in the absence of the compass of the constitution. The constitution has fixed the boundaries between state and national powers, and those boundaries should remain unchanged until the people themselves shall order a new survey. If this administration can decide that a thing is constitutional because and merely because it seems to jump with the people's interests, then the next administration will have the same power. The end would be that we should not have constitutional government at all, but a personal government, with the constitution shredded to furnish fringe for the executive mantle. And that, we submit, would be a calamity so far greater than any we are now facing that there is no comparison between them.

"In a word, much as we like the president, we still hold to the party of Jefferson. We still believe in that party, we deem its principles the most vital and forceful expression of free government which has yet been uttered, and we think that party, even in defeat, one of the nation's most precious possessions. Indeed, it is largely because of his Jeffersonian principles that we admire Roosevelt, and we usually have to part company with him when he parts company with those doctrines. The most notable feature of recent political life is the determination to bring the corporations under the law. That is a work peculiarly democratic, and it is a work of which President Roosevelt has made himself the leader to a degree unrivaled in the country. In supporting him as they have done, the democrats have but supported their own principles. When Roosevelt retires from the helm we hope it may be taken by one who is prepared to do the same work, only carried out to its logical conclusion. And that will take a democrat."

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THE 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 straightforward 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 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.