

# The Commoner.

ISSUED WEEKLY.

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But will Speaker Cannon be able to set the brakes when the president takes the whip and starts the congressional team?

"Uncle Joe" Cannon says that the next congress should do nothing. "Masterly inactivity" seems to be the slogan of the standpatters.

Is Secretary Taft—the great postponer—in favor of postponing national incorporation or is that one of the few things that should be attended to at once?

The news feature about the report of trouble in the Oklahoma republican convention was concealed in the fact that there were enough republicans present to permit of a riot.

A lot of Oklahomans are opposing the adoption of the constitution ostensibly on patriotic grounds, but really for the reason that statehood would end their territorial graft.

The steel trust made a net profit of \$45,000,000 during the last quarter. This is in money. The moral profit will not be known until the celestial bookkeeper strikes a balance.

A New York farmer is mourning because a barber cut off his twenty years growth of whiskers while he was asleep. He can console himself with the thought that they will have time to grow out again before the republican party reforms the tariff.

Schoneburg, Germany, has decided to put a double tax on vacant city lots. Is this a blow at the "unearned increment?" It is easy to guess what the speculators will say about this scheme to prevent them from profiting by the improvements made by others.

The Filipinos should begin their legislative work by passing a resolution declaring that the Filipino members of the Philippine commission should be selected by the Filipino assembly. They can not be expected to represent the Filipinos unless they are selected by them.

The United States government is spending \$75,000 to ascertain the population of Oklahoma and yet Secretary Taft complains that the democrats did not carve out the legislative districts with exactness. Are the democrats presumed to know more about the population than the government officials do?

## The Commoner.

### Washington Letter

Washington, D. C., September 9.—Recently the New York Herald came out with a strong editorial urging that the United States should sell the Philippine Islands. The Herald did not qualify its recommendation by suggesting the purchaser. It merely urged that this nation should get rid of a province which has been only a source of expense—expense in money and expense in the lives and the blood and the health of young Americans.

A proposition of this sort coming from an ultra conservative newspaper like the Herald has naturally awakened widespread interest and discussion. There is in Washington a subordinate office of the war department called the bureau of insular affairs. The chief of this bureau, General Edwards, is now engaged in making an estimate of what the Philippines has cost this country to the present day. The initial expenditure of course was \$20,000,000, but the resulting expenditure for the suppression of the native uprisings and the policing of the islands runs well up into the hundreds of millions. General Edwards says that his estimate is almost completed, but it can not be made public until congress meets, when it will be presented as an official report.

Talking to that universal character, the average man, any suggestion that the United States should rid itself of the Philippines will be met by two arguments: First, that having taken the islands we owe a responsibility to their people and must discharge it; second, that the islands are necessary to us as a naval and military outpost in order to maintain our control of the Pacific.

As to the first argument. The Filipinos do not seem to regard our responsibility very seriously, nor do they prize our benevolent purposes toward them as they should. After we had been in possession for nine years we gave them an opportunity to vote for representatives to a national assembly of their own. What was the result? Four-fifths of the representatives elected stood for the immediate independence of the islands, and made their campaign on that issue. That seems really ungrateful on the part of the natives who have for so long enjoyed the beneficence of American military rule, have been taxed to pay the bills of their rulers and have had the market for their best products shut off by the operation of the United States tariff.

As a matter of fact the movement which the Herald has inaugurated is meeting with support from unexpected quarters. That paper has been first to give public expression to what has long been the opinion of representatives and senators at the capital. It is probably a safe statement that nine out of ten of our public men wish we could be out of the Philippines with honor. It is true that not all think we should sell. Many believe, and with reason, that should we sell it should be to the Filipinos themselves, taking their bonds and maintaining the neutrality of the islands by our national power exactly as we support the Monroe doctrine. Others hold that we should wash our hands of a bad bargain and sell to Japan, the only probable purchaser.

It is rather curious to find a public man so closely allied with the administration as John Barrett, chief of the international bureau of American republics, publicly urging the sale of the islands. Few men in the United States know more concerning Asiatic conditions than he. He has served not merely as a journalist in Asia, but was minister to Siam and to several South American countries. He said yesterday that he had urged upon President McKinley immediately after the conclusion of the Spanish war that the United States should attempt to exchange the Philippines with England for the British possessions in the West Indies, including Jamaica, Bermuda and British Guiana. Any one who will take a map of the United States and study the relations which these islands bear to this country will see how inestimably more valuable they would be than the far off Philippines. Mr. Barrett tells me that the suggestion was received with interest and without unfriendliness on the part of England, and that President McKinley himself at first favored it. Later the president said that the possible moral responsibility of this country toward the Filipinos was such that it might seem necessary to hold the islands until the natives should be fit for self government. Who is going to judge when they are so fit, Mr. Barrett did not specify. In their last election the Filipinos seemed to indi-

cate that if they were the judges they are already well fitted for self-government.

The acting director of the census bureau in Washington said yesterday that practically ninety per cent of the census of Oklahoma had been completed. It indicates that that territory has about 1,500,000 population.

Under the enabling act passed by the Fifty-ninth congress Oklahoma and the Indian Territory are to be joined in one state as soon as the people of both unite in approval of a constitution. Nearly 400,000 inhabitants of the Indian Territory are to be added to the Oklahoma population when the wedded territories shall become a state. In brief the new state, if Mr. Roosevelt, Mr. Taft and Mr. Roosevelt's Rough Rider appointees will permit it to become a state, will have a population equalling that of Alabama, California, Iowa, Minnesota, New Jersey, Virginia, and closely approaching such historic commonwealths as Massachusetts, Michigan or Indiana.

It is seriously suggested now, and strenuously urged by Mr. Taft, who speaks for the president, that the two million people in the proposed state of Oklahoma are unfit for self government. The most serious charge brought against them is that they created a constitutional convention which had a nine to one majority of democrats; and that this convention adopted a constitution which strove to re-establish in that southwestern community the rights of the citizens that date back to the time of Magna Charta. It prohibits government by injunction; it is in line with the constitution of the United States in demanding for every man a trial by a jury of his peers. It provides for the truest form of democracy by establishing the initiative and referendum and the election of senators by the direct vote of the people; it makes provision for the conservation of public lands and for the proper control of public franchises to the end that these gifts from the people shall not be used to exploit the people.

Yet Mr. Taft goes into Oklahoma and attacks the constitution and even more bitterly berates the ninety per cent of the voters of the territory who adopted it. It seems to be a case of the eleven obstinate jurors. Taft is the one wise man; the some tens of thousands of voters who live in Oklahoma, have built it up, who know its needs are expected to submit to instruction upon their own affairs from the consul of the man in the White House.

WILLIS J. ABBOT.

#### MR. BRYAN IN OKLAHOMA

(Continued from Page 3)

cratic members from Oklahoma may cast the deciding vote on important legislation.

"The president has proposed the national incorporation of railroads and other corporations engaged in interstate commerce. As I have praised the president whenever he has recommended anything good, I shall not hesitate to criticize this proposal as one of the most dangerous devices in recent years. Its object is to transfer from the states to the nation entire control of railroads and other large corporations.

"And, my friends, because of my personal acquaintance with him, I want to say one word about your candidate for congress in this district. Mr. Fulton lived in my district when I was a candidate for congress fifteen and seventeen years ago and I had no more faithful, loyal supporter in my campaign. At that time, this young man had developed a character that made him admired and loved by all who knew him then; but he has had fifteen years added to his intellectual stature, and he has grown in strength and character, and I rejoice that you, in this district, are likely to have as your congressman, a man who fills my ideal as to what a congressman ought to be in the United States. I believe that he has the ability. I believe that he has the strength of will, and I know that his heart beats in sympathy with the toiling masses of his state. I know him so well, that I am willing to endorse in advance, any speech he will make, every vote he will cast, and if he goes wrong, charge it up to me—I stand behind him."

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The eastern papers are exploiting a purported interview in which a friend of Mr. Bryan is represented as announcing that Mr. Bryan has chosen the chairman of the next national convention and the chairman of the next national committee. The Commoner does not believe that the gentleman quoted made the statements attributed to him. But in any event no sensible man would believe that he spoke with authority.