

# Letters From the People

E. A. Paffrath, Amarillo, Texas— I note with pleasure yours of the 13th inst. addressed to his excellency, W. H. Taft, president of the United States, on the question of two constitutional amendments, one for an income tax and the other for the election of United States senators direct by the people. I would respectfully suggest that you add another amendment if, after consideration, it meets with your approval, and that is to give the people the right to recall United States senators when they do not conform with the national platform of their respective parties. In other words, to cure the possibility of a United States senator after being elected for six years, misrepresenting the will of the people in the United States senate in the interest of combines and trusts, a thing that should not be possible without the people having a remedy if we expect to continue this a government "of the people, for the people and by the people."

William Burgener, Riverdale, Cal.—As a number of problems have been sent in to you for solution by the readers, allow me to suggest a real hard one. We have been told by republicans in years past that the reduction of tariff duties on commodities (sugar, for instance) would lower the price to the serious detriment of the producer. So the proposed reduction of the duty on sugar would lower the price on sugar, but recently I heard a salesman tell a merchant that the price of sugar would go up as the new tariff would give them no protection. Now the great tariff conundrum is, how does the reduction of the tariff lower the price to the producer, and raise it to the consumer? If this problem is too hard for you, perhaps some good "standpatter" will answer it if you would offer a free subscription to The Commoner. To me it seems that the protective tariff question is getting to be a double-edged sword that will yet prove also to have a sharp handle.

S. C. Redd, Beaver Dam, Va.—I am more than amused at the strictures upon Mr. Bryan as a temperance man made by Henry E. Maine, Rochester, N. Y., in The Commoner, issue of the 16th inst. He says: "It is regrettable to see the democracy through its principal leader making the way to minute interference by government with the affairs of citizens." There is always more than one way of looking at social matters. What is considered right by one man may be regarded as wrong by another. These different views are often the result of moral associations. One man can see no evil in drunkenness, while another may regard it as a very serious detriment to society. I am 73 years of age, and for thirty years of my life I was a police justice, and came in contact with all sorts of crime and evil incident to our social life, and I am thoroughly convinced that the grog shops of our country were the cause of more crimes and necessary criminal expense than all other sources of evil. Government, especially democratic government is instituted for the general welfare of the governed. Equal opportunities (for good and not for evil) for all and special privileges to none, is our democratic principle. And "the greatest good to the greatest number" is another. Good democratic government does not offer equal opportunity for murder, rape and robbery. Its object is to suppress and prevent these. Another principle of democracy is to protect the weak against the strong, and the simple against the wiles of the cunning. It is not the province of good government to ordain that a

citizen shall not make strychnine, but it does say he shall not sell it, give it or administer it to his neighbor. "Undermining our institutions to prevent degenerates from abuse of alcohol is the greatest absurdity of the time," says Mr. Maine. And this charge he brings against democracy and Mr. Bryan as its principal leader. The charge is unfounded. The chief object of the law is to prevent making "degenerates" of our citizens. Degenerates don't abuse alcohol, but alcohol makes and abuses "degenerates." Alcohol is a poison, the most insidious and therefore most dangerous of all poisons. It creates its own demand, and is satisfied only in the death of its victim. I am an old man and I have never seen a grog shop licensed in any community that did not in a few years debauch and ruin it. Its use may never be prevented, but its sale should be suppressed by the government. You may drink yourself, but you shall not sell to your neighbor. This is good democratic government.

A Cornell, Burr Oak, Kan.—This is a country precinct. All told it cast 129 votes, seventy of which were for Mr. Bryan. To my knowledge there was at least \$35 contributed within eight weeks of election by democrats of this precinct who had no thought of any return from the investment other than the interest they held in the success of democratic principles. I suggest that what may be known as The Commoner Volunteer Army be organized on the following lines: In every precinct where there are enough democrats in sympathy with the Denver platform reforms, an organization be effected, that will guarantee \$5 per year for the next four years. This \$5 together with the names of five voters who did not vote for the adoption of these reforms be sent to The Commoner each year. Out of each \$5 the expenses incident to the five yearly subscriptions be taken and the remainder of the \$5, that is, the profit that would otherwise fall to the publisher of The Commoner, be considered as a contribution to the expenses of national organization. If there is no better plan suggested for the future and this plan should be adopted, as committeeman, I pledge the co-operation of this precinct. Considering results, this plan can be urged as one that promises an economical investment of campaign funds. Thereby it is possible to make a continuous appeal for a whole year to twenty different voters of each precinct. The appeal will come not for a few weeks only, when it will fall on minds made unfriendly by campaign prejudice but every week in the year the message will fall into the life, suggesting, repeatedly suggesting, sometimes, it is true when prejudice would be the master, but at times, again, when prejudice would be at its weakest.

Robert Lee Smith, Benton, Tenn.—Seeing so many letters from the people in The Commoner I thought I would join the number. I am a Bryan democrat and not a Jacob M. Dickinson democrat. I have supported William J. Bryan three times and am ready to do so again. I hope the people of the south will surely not believe that Dickinson represents them as a democrat in President Taft's cabinet. Ah, as ignorant as I am, I never will believe it; he may have been a democrat in times past, but now he is a republican.

J. E. Doom, Shawnee, Okla.—Will you be kind enough to publish Markham's poem, "The Man With the Hoe." I think it very appropriate to conditions, to which we are rapidly tending. After years of read-

ing I am, if possible, a greater friend of The Commoner than ever; long may it live. Years ago I saw a poem by James R. Lowell, styled "A Parable," representing the second coming of Christ, "but not by the gates of birth." The great of the earth hastened to do Him honor, exhibiting the magnificent temples and images erected to do Him honor. But the Son of Mary, beneath the foundation stones heard the groans of his toiling brethren. Christ brought a "Swart Artisan," and a "motherless maiden" whose fingers "faintly pushed from her Temptation and Crime." "These," said the Christ, "are the images ye have made of Me." A good companion piece to the "Man with the Hoe." The poems contain an object lesson and touch consciences, which mere logic and statistics never reach. The publication will be a great favor.

W. F. Switzer, Forest, Ohio.—I have been reading "letters from the people," some of whom have come dangerously near the truth. In our precinct there was no gain from republican to democratic except where republicans moved out and democrats moved in. I do not think that the country is ready to draw a line between righteousness and ungodliness. You came as near being elected as a man can be along moral lines. Nine-tenths of the voters are still looking for the dollar. An illustration of the fact is the election of J. Cannon speaker of the house. By the word voters we do not mean the masses, but the few who control the masses. There are generally a few men in each ward and precinct who have no principle and less politics, who control the elections for personal gain. One mistake the democrats make is in not taking advantage of every means at hand to fill places with democrats and thus further our principles. I do not exactly believe in the spoils system, but the republicans take advantage of every availing means to further their cause, an illustration in the appointing of Dickinson to a cabinet office. I believe to win the only way is to follow the example you have set to educate the people. If we can properly show up the tariff farce we will have gained a long stride toward success. In the president's message one is reminded that "when he openeth his mouth he putteth his foot in it." I am not disappointed in the man. Several things appearing on the horizon look good to democrats, but a lamentable thing that so-called democrats would betray their party and their platform. You did just right in exposing them. The insurgent republicans are doing a great work in exposing the g. o. p and thus materially aiding the democrats. Let the good work go on. All hope of reform is centered on the younger generation. All men of Aldrich's and Cannon's ilk should be removed from authority, and no more lobsters should be elected to the presidency. In conclusion will say that I have voted for you three times and would vote for you three times more should you be a candidate and I be spared to do so. The cause is just and right. You have done a wonderful work. I would rather have the credit that is due you than be president. While you may never reach the presidential goal, you have been and are making it very "hot for them in the old town." I am proud to be numbered in line with your thoughts and ideas, and doubly proud in all and them, all that you have said or done, the spirit of the lowly Nazarene has been shown. This life should be more than "meat and drink." Last fall I distributed over two hundred Bryan lithographs and over two hundred Bryan buttons in this vicinity. I say we had "them going some." My work is not con-

finned to any one precinct but where ever I can do any good for the party. Nor will I lend a hand to anything that I would need to be ashamed of. I would say keep hammering away. Last fall the g. o. p. were on the defensive and I hope by the next

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