

The Commoner.

ISSUED WEEKLY.

Entered at the Postoffice at Lincoln, Nebraska, as second-class matter.

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 Editorial Rooms and Business Office 324-330 South 12th Street

One Year.....\$1.00
 Six Months......50
 In Clubs of Five or more, per year... .75
 Three Months..... .25
 Single Copy..... .05
 Sample Copies Free.
 Foreign Post. 5c Extra.

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Where Congressmen Stand

Defiance, O., October 15, 1909.—C. W. Bryan, Publisher The Commoner, Lincoln, Neb.—Dear Sir: I recently wrote Colonel Bryan that I was in hearty accord with the tariff platform proposed by him. It is sound democratic doctrine and had the democratic senators and congressmen stood solidly for the democratic idea during the late lamented special session our position would have been impregnable.

Very truly yours,
 T. T. ANSBERRY.

FERRER

The New York Tribune says: "We can not believe that even the present reactionary government of Spain would be so fatuous and so wicked as deliberately to make a martyr to free thought and to put such a man as Mr. Ferrer to death for no other reason than his 'modernism.' If it had done so it would be guilty of one of the most foolish crimes and most criminal follies of the age. It must be that there were other reasons for its action. In that case, for its own sake and for the sake of humanity, it is to be hoped that it will speedily make those reasons known so clearly that the world will be convinced of their sufficiency and justice."

But Spanish authorities have already shown signs of regretting the killing of Ferrer and it seems to be agreed that the king quarreled with his premier because of the execution. Whatever may be the differences of opinion with respect to Ferrer's teachings history reveals that governments make mistakes when they seek to meet argument with blows or undertake to destroy organized movements by the killing of the leaders.

The answer to Ferrer's teachings was a Spanish government which the people would love rather than fear. Conditions are only aggravated when the government resorts to methods which increase popular hatred for it.

THE BLOOD OF THE MARTYRS

It is an old saying that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church and the phrase embodies an important truth. The punishment of one who is not a criminal but merely the representative of a righteous sentiment is sure to strengthen the sentiment. If Mr. Gompers and his associates are imprisoned they can well afford to endure it with patience because they could not in any other way advance their cause so much in so short a time. Prisons were not intended for those who battle for human rights and the use of them for such a purpose reacts against the persecutors and, in the end, hastens justice.

President Taft's message delivered to congress December 7 is not a long address—nor a particularly impressive one.

In the beginning the president says that the relations of the United States with all foreign governments "have continued upon the normal basis of amity and good understanding and are very generally satisfactory."

Several pages are devoted to a description of our relations with several European countries. In this it is said that the questions relating to the fisheries on the north Atlantic coast which have been a cause of difference between the United States and Great Britain for nearly seventy years, have been submitted to the permanent court of arbitration at The Hague; the treaty concerning the Canadian international boundary provided for the appointment of two commissioners but these commissioners failed to agree and this question must now be submitted to arbitration; a system of uniform international regulation for the protection of food fishes in international boundary waters of the United States and Canada has been completed by the international fisheries commission and will be submitted to congress for the enactment of proper legislation; Great Britain has not yet ratified the treaty approved by the United States senate March 3, 1909, and providing for the settlement of differences between the United States and Canada relating particularly to certain of the boundary waters; the United States has appointed commissioners to act with those of Canada in examining obstructions in the St. John river; negotiations are in progress for an international conference between the United States, Great Britain, Japan and Russia for an arrangement for the protection of the fur seals in the north Pacific; the "declaration of London" agreed to, in February 1909, by the United States, Austria, Hungary, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Russia and Spain, agreed upon certain provisions relating to the subjects of blockade, contraband, the destruction of neutral prizes and continuous voyages and the president hopes for the adoption of this declaration in international maritime law; a project concerning the limitation of the responsibility of ship owners and one concerning marine mortgages and privileges have been submitted to the different governments; a conference of these governments will be held again April 11, 1910; an international conference for the purpose of promoting legislation concerning letters of exchange will meet at The Hague in June, 1910; congress is urged to accept Belgium's cordial invitation that "a fitting display of American progress in the useful arts and inventions" be made at the world's fair to be held at Brussels in 1910; with respect to the Belgium annexation of the independent state of the Congo, the president says: "The attitude of the United States is one of benevolent encouragement coupled with the hopeful trust that the good work responsibly undertaken and zealously perfected to the accomplishment of the results so ardently desired, will soon justify the wisdom that inspires them and satisfy the demands of humane sentiment throughout the world;" negotiations are being made for the placing of American inventions on the same footing as nationals, have recently been initiated with European governments whose laws require the local working of foreign patents; the report of our commissioners to the republic of Liberia will, in the president's opinion, result in some measures helpful to both countries.

Under the title "The Near East" the president says that our relations with Turkey under the new sultan are satisfactory and that we ought to get a large and increasing share of the trade of "the near east."

Under the title "Latin America," the president shows his gratification by the settlement of the dispute between Bolivia and Peru; calls attention to the fourth Pan-American conference to be held July 9, 1910, at Buenos Ayres and asks for a liberal appropriation for "a distin-

guished and representative delegation;" calls attention to the international agricultural exposition to be held at Buenos Ayres from May to November, 1910, and advises participation by this country; he emphasizes the importance of the government granting full protection to American citizens doing business in South America; points with pride to his meeting with President Diaz; expresses gratification that all but one of the cases which for so long vexed our relations with Venezuela have been settled; says the government of Panama has agreed to indemnify the relatives of the American officers and sailors who were brutally treated by the Panama police; says Cuba is maintaining the sanitary improvements inaugurated by this government; says that the United States was obliged to intervene diplomatically to bring about a settlement of the claim of the Emery company against Nicaragua, effecting settlement in September, 1909. In referring to the trouble of the Zelaya government of Nicaragua, the president says that many complaints against this government have been made and that our representatives have acted very carefully. He refers to "the sad tale of unspeakable barbarities and oppression alleged to have been committed by the Zelaya government" and he adds: "Recently two Americans were put to death by order of President Zelaya himself. They were reported to have been regularly commissioned officers in the organized forces of a revolution which had continued many weeks and was proceeding in an orderly fashion in control of about half of the republic, and as such, according to the modern enlightened practice of civilized nations, they would be entitled to be dealt with as prisoners of war."

In a chapter entitled "The Far East" the president says we are doing well with China. He says that the administration encouraged a group of American bankers to participate in the Chinese railroad loan and that one of the terms was that American railroad material should be put upon an exact equality with that of other countries joining in the loan. He says that no monopoly was intended or accomplished in mining privileges along the South Manchurian and Antung-Mukden railroads in the September 4 agreement between China and Japan.

The president makes brief reference to our relations with Japan, saying those relations are as cordial as usual and that the matter of a revision of the existing treaty, which terminates in 1912, is receiving the study of both governments.

In a chapter entitled "The Department of State," the president recommends favorable action on the recommendation of the secretary of state to the effect that there be created divisions of Latin-American and far eastern affairs together with a certain specialization in business with Europe and the near east.

On the question of "government expenditures and revenues" the president approves the proposal that the deficit be met by the proceeds of bonds issued to pay for the Panama canal. The deficit in the ordinary expenditures for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1910, will exceed the estimated receipts by more than \$34,000,000. He says the Panama canal will be completed by January, 1915, and that its cost will be \$297,766,000 instead of \$139,705,200 as originally estimated.

The president recommends the establishment of some system of civil pensions for superannuated governmental employes. In discussing the question of public expenditure, the president says "we can not, in view of the advancing prices of living, hope to save money by reduction in the standard of salaries paid. Indeed, if any change is made in that regard an increase rather than a decrease will be necessary."

Referring to the frauds in the collection of customs at New York City he says that criminal prosecutions are now proceeding and efforts will be made to discover all the wrongdoers including the officers and employes of the companies who may have been privy to the frauds.

Referring to the maximum and minimum clause in the tariff act, the president points out that that clause provided that if the president finds that the laws and practices of a country are not unduly discriminatory against the United States the minimum duties, provided in the tariff bill, are to go into court, otherwise the maximum duties, being a 25 per cent ad valorem increase over the minimum duties, are to be enforced. The president says that there need be no worry that this power conferred upon the