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The Million Army

Among the letters received in reply to Senator Owen's question, "If the people really rule, why don't the people get what they want?" was one from Mr. J. F. Huntzinger, Enid, Okla. Mr. Huntzinger's letter is interesting for several reasons and is printed here in full. He says: "The reason the people do not rule, therefore do not get what they want is their own inactivity. Action is the law of God. The good people generally as members of one or the other party are like many church members; all they think necessary on their part is to send out a petition in words and expect their wants—or rather demands—to be supplied. If men want results they must have right motives, followed with right thinking, taking form in right actions right now. Every man should make it his business to watch the caucus and the primaries. Question all candidates closely on the many vital questions before the public today, and work openly for the man who declares himself for the people. Then and not till then will the people rule and get what they need, if they don't get all they want. To those who are willing, but don't just know how to act, I would advise them to at once join The Commoner's Million Army and follow the line of action laid down every week in The Commoner and the results will be for the good of all."

Archie A. Shanburg, Goodland, Kan.—We all realize Mr. Bryan is doing a great educational work among the people. I am sending you two applications for The Commoner's Million Army. Will send more as my time permits.

Albert A. Mann, Steamboat Springs, Colo.—I am grateful to you for the invitation to cooperate with you in the matter of obtaining candidates who stand for the people instead of for special interests, and I appreciate the good work of The Commoner in championing this cause. I am with you, and trust that the democrats of the next congress will be found loyally standing on the platform, and that the platform is up to the standard of the Denver platform.

Henry Wilbur, Hutto, Texas.—I am not a citizen of Texas—only visiting relatives and in search of health. I am in sympathy with your good work and duly appreciate your efforts in the work of regeneration, and only hope I may live to see the overthrow and downfall of the party in power. Politics are at a very low ebb, and to purify them it will take drastic measures. When a man is elected and violates his oath of

"Catch-My-Pal"---A Tremendous Nickname

Some movements are better known by their nicknames than by the formal titles attributed to them by their organizers. It is a good augury for the success of any reform when the public attaches to it a pet name. It at least implies interest, a little admiration and sometimes no small affection for the cause. In Ireland just now we have a remarkable example of this. The most popular movement that has stirred the Emerald isle in years is known wholly by a nickname.

The formal designation of the "Catch-My-Pal" organization is the somewhat prosaic title, "Protestant Total Abstinence Union." But it must needs be a very formal occasion indeed when that title is heard.

The movement began in a very simple way. On the evening of the 13th of July, 1909, Rev. R. J. Patterson, pastor in Armagh, was coming home when he noticed a small group of men lounging around a lamp post. He bade one of them "good-night," and in response to the salutation the man made some slighting remark about his companions and their weakness for drink. Mr. Patterson stopped, asked the man if he really meant what he said, spoke to the others, took them round to his manse, and in the dining room that night the society was born.

These six men went away pledged to turn up again in the same place on a succeeding evening, each with another man who wanted to give up the drink. Prompt to the moment they all arrived, bringing their boon companions. They prayed together, and all pledged themselves to go out and get others to join with them.

Since that night the movement has steadily grown until now there are over 70,000 members. The incidents told in the various meetings are sometimes very thrilling. Men who had never been sober for a week at a time since they remember have been stanch teetotalers and aggressive temperance workers for the last six months. The men who drink have proved themselves best suited to persuade their comrades to join them in this new crusade.

Other temperance movements have been apparently run too much by total abstiners, and those who needed most to be reached could not be approached by men of that type. They resented all interference with their personal liberty from men who had apparently never understood the so-called friendly ties developed round the social glass.

All great institutions, as some one has said, are but the lengthening shadow of some unique personality. This truth is at once apparent in this instance. Mr. Patterson is a man in a class by himself. He combines in a marked degree devoutness and humor, sanity and enthusiasm, simplicity and eloquence. He can attract men and set them to work. How he has been able to do so much in so short a time it is difficult to understand.

The distinctive feature of the union is of course the fundamental principle of each one pledging himself to get another. There is nothing new about such a principle, but somehow it has never been applied in connection with tem-

perance in just the same way or with the same beneficent results. The men who have stopped drinking need something to occupy their attention and excite their interest. Nothing seems so fitting to do this as trying to persuade some other man to leave liquor and join the society.

Some Irish towns of 3,000 or 4,000 inhabitants have been so influenced by the movement that almost all the men who tipped have taken the pledge and left the public houses without customers. Over the whole province of Ulster the effect has been noted in the great decrease of crime, so that the judges at the recent assizes had to compliment several of the counties on their unusual condition of peacefulness.

The movement has created a sentiment in favor of sobriety among the very classes who formerly thought it no disgrace to get drunk. It has also awakened enthusiasm in all districts it has reached, not only among the drinkers but among temperance workers who had fallen into a rut and were making little if any impression on the community.

Another very important effect of the union has been the bringing together on a common temperance platform of all Protestant denominations. Never before in Ireland have the Episcopalians, the Presbyterians and the Methodists fraternized as they are doing now in connection with this organization.

The pledge and ritual are as simple as can be. All members stand, hold up the open hand, and repeat together phrase by phrase these words:

"For God and home and native land, I promise to abstain from all intoxicating drinks as beverages, and to do all that in me lies to promote the cause of total abstinence by getting others to join the union."

Then they shut their fists and say word by word:

"We—will—see—this—thing—through."

The pledge may be taken for months or years or for life. The weekly meetings are marked by this public pledge-taking. If a man breaks his pledge he can be restored only by the vote of the members and must be restored publicly. It is remarkable how few have as yet broken these pledges. Perhaps the publicity has helped to keep the pledge-takers constant. I fear that a large majority of the pledges signed in private are broken in a very short time. These men can get those who have broken their pledge to come back and face their fellow members again when Christian workers would have very little chance of succeeding.

All the meetings are opened and closed with religious exercises and the Lord's Prayer is repeated in unison by all present.

It is too soon yet—and we are too near the active participants—to express any opinion as to the permanence of the movement. However, all admit it is doing a splendid work and the organization has in it all the elements of success. Never since the days of Father Mathew have temperance meetings been so popular, the audiences so large, the speakers so effective or the results so satisfactory.

office prosecute him for perjury, and when he is elected on a good platform fix it so when he steps off that platform he steps off the earth. Then we will have honest politics. A long time ago Henry Clay of Kentucky said every man had his price, but I did not think

at that time they would ever be placed on the bargain counter. I am a river pilot and captain on the Mississippi and Ohio rivers and have been since 1856 and am on the down grade at the age of 74 years, and by the way will do all I can for you.

APPLICATION BLANK
The Commoner's Million Army
I hereby enlist in The Commoner's Million Army, and pledge my assistance to secure the nomination of only worthy and incorruptible men as democratic candidates; that I will attend democratic primaries and nominating conventions, and assist in promoting the great democratic campaign of education by devoting a reasonable share of my time to the distribution of literature. I will recommend I can assist to increase the usefulness of this organization.
Signed
Address
With the understanding that Mr. Bryan agrees to accept annual subscriptions to The Commoner from members of this Army at a net rate of 65 cents each, and that each subscription to The Commoner shall include a subscription to The American Homestead (a strong home and farm paper)—thus leaving The Commoner free to devote its undivided efforts to political matters and current events—I enclose herewith 65 cents for one annual subscription to The Commoner (including The American Homestead). If you are already a subscriber to The Commoner and do not care to extend your expiration date at this time, the last paragraph above may be disregarded.