

# The Commoner.

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## "The Commoner and the Common People"

Under the headline, "The Commoner and the Common People," the Nashville Tennessean prints the following editorial:

Mr. Bryan's paper, The Commoner, was started twelve years ago, and in the first issue appeared this declaration:

"The Commoner will be satisfied if, by fidelity to the common people, it proves its right to the name which has been chosen."

At the beginning of each year this statement has been reproduced, and we imagine that a great majority of the readers agree that the paper has proved its right to the name it bears, for if there is a public journal in America free and unhampered, and in thorough sympathy with the people, that journal is The Commoner.

In the last issue this was added to the annual announcement:

"It is not for the editor to say whether The Commoner has proved its right to the name it bears. Those who have habitually read this publication are to be the judges. It is sufficient for the editor of The Commoner to know—and perhaps pardonable for him to say—that if The Commoner has made mistakes they have not been mistakes of the heart; that its purpose has ever been to stand for the public interests and to make the great political party with which it affiliates of practical service to the people, to the end that a government erected, as our government was, in 'liberty's unclouded blaze,' shall be in truth what the fathers intended it should be—government by and for the people."

Mr. Bryan and his Commoner have done great work for the people. The Commoner has proved its right to the name it bears, and Mr. Bryan has demonstrated his capacity and worth as a great leader.

The Commoner has very materially aided its owner in dissemi-

nating the principles of democracy and free government throughout the land, and has made Mr. Bryan stronger than he would have been without its aid, because of the widespread publicity given his ideas and contentions.

That paper has been a convenient medium through which Mr. Bryan has been enabled to effectively reply to unjust criticism and slanderous assault upon him, and to point the way for those who believe in a government of, by, and for the people.

Mr. Bryan hates corrupt ring rule wherever it may exist, and he never hesitates to fight it. He has fought relentlessly Sullivan of Illinois, Guffey of Pennsylvania, and Murphy of New York, and his fight against such bosses has been effective. They are passing from the scene of action.

Cordially supported by the Nebraskan, Governor Sulzer of New York, replying to an inquiry as to what part Boss Murphy would be allowed to take in the administration of state affairs, said:

"I am the democratic leader of the state; the people decreed it at the polls, and I stand on their verdict. I can't succeed in doing what I want to do as governor unless I am the democratic leader. If any democrat in the state challenges that leadership, let him come out in the open, and the people will decide."

Mr. Bryan has given us all courage, as he gave Governor Sulzer courage to resist the encroachments of an insolent boss, for when he drove out the agents of special interests from the Baltimore convention and made it possible to have a democratic nominee and a platform to suit the people, he gave increased hope to the people and renewed courage to those who represent the people.

### Special Interests Active

The Commoner is in receipt of reports from various state capitals calling attention to the activity of franchise-holding corporations. A word of warning is therefore offered to democrats in official positions.

Truth is self-evident; the only trouble is that so many persons in public life are blinded either by their own interests or by the interests of those whom they desire to aid. As a result, authority is misused, power is embezzled. Whenever a party wins a victory, it is put on trial; if it lives up to its responsibilities, it strengthens itself and prolongs its tenure; if it is false to its trust, it is repudiated. The special interests are laying siege to every governor—democratic and republican—they are attempting to lead astray every approachable state senator and representative. The constituents must be

on guard constantly; they must keep in communication with their representatives; they must let their public servants know that they are being watched. "Equal rights to all and special privileges to none" is a democratic doctrine, applicable in nation, in state, in county and in city. No democrat deserves to be trusted by the people who favors special interests at the expense of the people. If the democratic party will only keep its platform pledges, it ought to stay in power for a generation. If it fails, the wrath of a disappointed people will fall upon those responsible for the failure. As it is better to prevent failure than to punish those responsible for it, let every democrat make it his duty to spur his representatives up to the discharge of the duties devolving upon them.

#### A STRANGE OBJECTION

Mr. A. B. Hepburn, chairman of the board of the Chase National bank of New York, says that the guarantee of deposits would make the good bankers responsible for the actions of bad bankers. That is a strange objection to come from a banker who requires personal security and does not hesitate to compel the surety to pay the debt of his principal.

#### WHEN STATE'S RIGHTS END

In the opinion of some democratic statesmen state's rights end when a brewery or distillery wants to send its product into another state. Strange what influence concentrated wealth can exert, no matter how base the use, to which it is put! But the clock is ticking—soon the hour will strike and the liquor lobby will be driven from the capitol.

#### SPEAKING OF EFFRONTERY

Speaking of effrontery, what about the official of the Waltham Watch company who admits that the same watch which sells for \$32.50 in America retails at \$10 in the Balkan states and still asks for tariff protection?—St. Louis Republic.

### Why Not Condemn Root?

The New York Herald, spokesman for the special interests, complains because of Woodrow Wilson's remarks to the business men at Chicago. The Herald quotes from a number of newspapers to show that Mr. Wilson's statements are regarded as being extremely radical. The Herald prints a cartoon showing Governor Wilson "running amuck" with Theodore Roosevelt perched in a tree, the cartoon being labeled, "Even Roosevelt Takes to the Tall Timber."

The Herald is simply trying to frighten itself. Governor Wilson has said nothing to alarm any honest business man. If the editor desires to find something to give him reason for becoming indignant let him read the address delivered by Elihu Root (the New York senator whom the Herald delights to honor) before the New York chamber of commerce, November 21. In that address Senator Root said:

"There are hundreds of thousands of people outside the great industrial communities who think you are a den of thieves; there are hundreds of thousands of people who think that the manufacturers of the country are no better than a set of confidence men."

Why not answer Senator Root's arraignment before displaying such great concern over Governor Wilson's moderate statements?

#### EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW

The Rockefeller case, coming immediately after the conviction of the labor leaders, puts the strength of our government to the test. It has shown that it can punish wage-earners when convicted of lawlessness—can it compel a great financier to respect the law? The importance of Rockefeller's testimony becomes an immaterial question—the issue now is whether a man can become rich enough to defy congress.

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