

## The Commoner.

ISSUED WEEKLY

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

WILLIAM J. BRYAN  
Editor and Proprietor

CHARLES W. BRYAN  
Publisher

RICHARD L. METCALFE  
Associate Editor

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, 52c Extra.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS** can be sent direct to The Commoner. They can also be sent through newspapers which have advertised a clubbing rate, or through local agents, where sub-agents have been appointed. All remittances should be sent by post-office money order, express order, or by bank draft on New York or Chicago. Do not send individual checks, stamps or money.

**RENEWALS**—The date on your wrapper shows the time to which your subscription is paid. Thus January 31, '13 means that payment has been received to and including the last issue of January, 1913. Two weeks are required after money has been received before the date on wrapper can be changed.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**—Subscribers requesting a change of address must give old as well as new address.

**ADVERTISING**—Rates will be furnished upon application.

Address all communications to

THE COMMONER, Lincoln, Neb.

### CONGRESSMAN STEPHENS' PLAN OF SELECTING POSTMASTERS

Rules for selecting postmasters in the Third congressional district of Nebraska insofar as they affect the action of the present congressman:

When there is agreement among leading democrats, especially the local democratic committee and club, and the chairman of the county central committee, who is supposed to speak for its membership, upon a candidate for postmaster, I shall consider it my duty to accept such indorsement as final and recommend such a candidate to the president for appointment.

If on the other hand the local democratic committee, the democratic club, and the county committee can not agree upon a candidate, they could, if they choose, leave the selection to a vote of the people, limiting the filings as candidates to democrats. I would consider it a moral obligation to recommend the candidate who receives the plurality of votes at such an election. Such an election should be conducted according to the following rules:

1. Filings for nomination as postmaster to be made with the chairman of the local democratic committee and only filings of men well known as democrats to be accepted, and these candidates to be approved as such by the chairman of the democratic county central committee.

2. After the approval of the list of candidates by the chairman of the local and county committees, their names may be printed on the ballot upon the payment of a filing fee to the chairman of the local democratic committee sufficient to pay for the cost of conducting the primary.

3. Each candidate must choose one member of the election board to have charge of the election, and the chairman of the local democratic committee to act as chairman of the board, ex-officio.

4. The election board shall agree unanimously upon the time and place of holding the election and prepare the ballots.

5. Any legal voter who is a patron of the post office, whether within or without the corporate limits of the town should be allowed to vote, regardless of politics.

6. When the vote is canvassed a certificate of election should be issued signed by all the members of the election board, showing that all the above requirements have been carried out, and the names of the candidates voted upon, together with the number of votes cast for each candidate. This certificate should then be filed with me and will at the proper time be presented with my indorsement of the candidate named, to the president for his consideration.

DAN V. STEPHENS, M. C.

### FINE WORDS

The Chicago Record-Herald says: Those who feared that Mr. Bryan would be too visionary or sentimental in applying high ideals to difficult and delicate foreign affairs admit that his first important act showed good sense and open-mindedness.

## First Week of the Wilson Administration

Sumner Curtis, Washington correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald, has written the following interesting review of the first week of the Wilson administration. He writes: Distinctly favorable is the impression created at the capital by the Wilson administration during the first week of its existence. Washington wonders and speculates wildly before an inauguration that marks a change in party control, but forms its impressions quickly after the new regime is installed. Sometimes first impressions have to be revised, but the significant thing in this instance is that many who were cynical regarding Wilson methods in advance, are speaking approvingly of the manner in which affairs have been started.

There is an unmistakable "tone" to the new administration as a whole which many feared might be lacking. When the democratic party went on the rocks in 1896, predictions were made that if it was hauled off and patched up and perhaps put into power again, there would be missing that high-class personnel which gave stability and distinction to the Cleveland administration. For instance, the general atmosphere indicates that the party has recovered its equilibrium, its "tone," if you will.

And strangely enough, no person, next to President Wilson himself, gives it more tone on the threshold of its re-assumption of rule than the Bryan of Nebraska who sixteen years ago threw the conservative element of the country into convulsion every time his name was mentioned.

Its aim, that of making a record in the interest of the "common people"—that much abused and bromidic term—the administration at the outset, one observes, is not exciting fears of running amuck. In this connection one can not help observing also that the developments of the last few years have broadened the vision of those in the conservative fold who formerly were imbued with the idea that the salvation of the country depended on the running of the government by the privileged classes—the only ones with the God-given qualifications for prescribing what was good for the masses. Likewise men like Bryan have broadened.

It is interesting to note that men connected with financial operations—men whose interests are vitally concerned with the effect of an administration on "business," speak in terms of confidence of the outlook. They express satisfaction with the general make-up of the cabinet. Previously they had their doubts about what the official family would be. In speaking of the prospect of a "Bryan cabinet," they did not have in mind the presence of the commoner at the board so much as the bringing in of subcaliber radicals who had been Bryan followers.

Now it is admitted that President Wilson has selected his advisers with a view to having men who measure up to their positions; that he picked each one with reference to peculiar qualifications that might not be apparent on the surface when considering the respective duties of administration. Merely to illustrate, the selection for a secretary of war of an equity jurist of renown instead of a military or semi-military man, with an eye to the great problems for solution outside the technical management, shows the broad objective of the executive. The selection of an equity lawyer for secretary of the interior for the same reasons shows it also.

The pondering of these and other features of the situation is what leads to the conclusion that the administration will be popular, yet safe and sane. In foreign as well as domestic affairs no upheaval that will unsettle or damage is expected. Policies may be revised and in some cases reversed, but it is felt that patriotic effort and ability will maintain the national balance.

Impartial observers approve the manner in which President Wilson has set out to deal with the present all-engrossing patronage question. Fundamentally it shows his determination to have the assistance of the best talent obtainable from the top to the bottom of the administration structure. The "organization" will be recognized, but it must present men of personal merit and fitness to fill the positions sought.

The consulting of republican, as well as democratic, senators regarding appointments

from their respective states has brought about an initial good feeling that is likely to bring happy results when the exigencies of nonpolitical legislation require nonpartisan pulling together in congress. At the very outset, moreover, the new president showed that he was ready to deal with the men who are in politics regardless of their classification. He called in Cummins of Iowa one day and Penrose of Pennsylvania the next. Washington understands the underlying purpose, recognizes that the independence of the executive is not going to be broken with contact with either one element or the other and approves.

As yet there has been no time for the president or any of his cabinet to get down to matters of policy beyond those pertaining to organization. The heads of departments feel a new responsibility in having thrust upon them in large measure the duty of making appointments. They already are feeling the burden, but the onlooker says "Good!" to the president's ukase that Tom Dick and Harry shall not trespass all over the field and confuse him with their unsolicited explanations of what they have done for the party and what they are willing to do for the administration in office.

The civil service seems to be in safe hands. Here is another cause for congratulation. Appointive officers like postmasters and others of that class are not to be removed before the ends of their terms unless found inefficient. Altogether a course has been mapped out which, if followed in other matters, seems likely to win an approval from the country that will outweigh whatever there may be of disgruntled feeling on the part of some old-time spoils politicians.

When it comes to the broader policies of legislation, of administration, of domestic affairs through the departments and the conduct of foreign relations we may only judge as yet from utterances made before the inauguration and before the election and from the record and previously studied mental attitude of the members of the administration. One of the things inclining men of large affairs to believe that the administration will be wise is the indication, from his brief record in practical political life, that President Wilson will not be tempted to approve legislation merely because it is popular. In other words, he will not hesitate to exercise the veto power with the sincerity of purpose of his predecessor in office when so-called popular legislation violates the rules of justice and equity.

Mr. Bryan's power in the administration is the subject of most interesting speculation. As things have started he will be very close to the president in matters of domestic as well as foreign policy. Some are predicting that two men of such strong mentality and positiveness of political conviction as President Wilson and Secretary Bryan can not get along together to the finish of the term.

Everything about Mr. Bryan indicates that he is heart and soul in the task of making the administration a success. Yet predictions are being made that there will be a split in less than a year. Trouble borrowers are suggesting the parallel of Bryan in Wilson's cabinet and Blaine in Harrison's cabinet. They say Bryan is ambitious to occupy the presidential chair; that he wants to succeed Wilson peaceably if he can; but that circumstances might arise which would influence him to play a part similar to that played by Blaine in 1892.

Mr. Bryan's position in the estimation of the people represented by the office-seeking contingent in Washington is very clear. The secretary of state is the most sought-after man in the country since the president put up the "Keep off the Grass" sign in the White House grounds. He may have to put up the bars on his own account in a day or two.

### UNIFORMLY COMMENDATORY

Dubuque (Ia.) Telegraph-Herald: Though recognizing the responsibilities confronting his administration and not unmindful of the obstacles to be overcome, the inaugural message of Woodrow Wilson is fraught with optimism. It is a document, scholarly, profound in its thought and eminently sane. The press has been uniformly commendatory in its editorial comment.