

ELECTION OF POSTMASTERS

The plan of selecting postmasters at a primary election, as devised and is being carried out by Congressman Dan Stephens of the Third Nebraska district, is attracting considerable attention throughout the country. Following the inauguration of President Wilson, Congressman Stephens announced that he would direct that primaries be held in the various towns for the selection of postmasters and the candidates for the office receiving the highest number of votes in their respective towns would be endorsed by the congressman to the postoffice department at Washington for appointment as postmasters. At some towns in Mr. Stephens' district where the democrats preferred it, the voting for the selection of postmaster was confined to democratic patrons of the office only. At other places in the district the plan was tried of permitting all patrons of the office to express their choice for postmaster. Inasmuch, however, as the postoffice appointments are made by the president and as the administration is democratic and the appointments are political, Mr. Stephens' rules provided that only democrats of standing in their respective communities could file as candidates for postmaster. The plan of selecting postmasters whether the voting was confined to democrats or to all patrons of the office caused Mr. Stephens to be censured by local democratic leaders who felt that they were entitled to the office without submitting their candidacies to the public. Opposition to Mr. Stephens was not only carried into his campaign for renomination but one or more democratic papers of his district and a number of local democratic leaders bolted Mr. Stephens' nomination on account of their opposition to his postoffice primary plan, and opposed his re-election during the campaign. It has been said by some of the Nebraska opponents of the plan of electing postmasters at primaries that the re-election of Congressman Stephens, by double the majority that he received two years ago, was not an endorsement of his plan of selecting postmasters by popular vote, but that his re-election by an increased majority should be attributed to his good record at Washington.

Although Mr. Stephens made a splendid record at Washington, the attributing of his re-election to his good record at Washington would, if carried to its logical conclusion, give the impression that other prominent Nebraska congressmen, who were defeated at the recent election, were defeated on account of their failure to make a good record at Washington. The Commoner knows of no one who would criticize the splendid record made by the democratic congressman from Nebraska who was defeated at the recent election and therefore agrees with Congressman Stephens that the decrease in his majority from 4,000 two years ago to 8,500 in the recent election must be construed as a splendid vindication of the plan of permitting the people to rule in the selection of postmasters. In announcing the rules for the conduct of postoffice primary elections in eight additional towns in his district, Congressman Stephens is quoted in press dispatches from Washington under date of December 11, as follows: "I will never hold another primary in which democrats only are permitted to vote. Such primaries have caused me trouble. All patrons may vote. I am convinced of the wisdom of this method of selecting postmasters." A further trial of Congressman Stephens' plan will be watched by all who are interested in the progress that has been made during the past few years in bringing the government closer to the people.

In the publication of Mr. Bryan's lecture entitled, "The Making of a Man," in the November issue of The Commoner, omission was made of the fact that the lecture was copyrighted by the Fleming H. Revell Co., publishers, New York City. The Revell Co. is publishing the lecture in pamphlet form for sale, and all requests for copies of the lecture or for permission to reprint should be directed to the Fleming H. Revell Co., New York City.

THE VOTE IN ILLINOIS

The following figures, which are taken from The Commoner, plainly show that near democrats are not popular in Illinois: For president—1896, Bryan, 464,632; 1900, Bryan, 503,061; 1904, Parker, 327,606; 1908, Bryan, 450,795; 1912, Wilson, 405,048. For senator—1914, Sullivan, 372,005.—The Jeffersonian, Los Angeles, Cal.

Boys, Will You Sign the Pledge With Me?

On another page will be found the Detroit Times' description of the Ann Arbor, Michigan, meeting of November 28th. The pledge of total abstinence is being signed by a host of boys in Michigan—why not the boys of other states as well? A book will be opened at The Commoner office, wherein will be entered the names and addresses of those who sign this pledge with me. Cut out the pledge, paste it on a piece of paper and sign it. Lay the pledge away that you may have it as a reminder of the decision you have made, but send a postal card to The

Commoner, stating that you have signed it, and giving your age and address. If you do not care to state your age use the word "adult," instead of giving the number of years. Receipt of these pledges will be acknowledged by publication in The Commoner in which only the name and address will be given. Ask others to sign with you—secure as many signatures as possible—and thus be the means of spreading the influence of the pledge. Those who abstain from drink do good not only to themselves, but to those also who are encouraged by their example.

W. J. BRYAN.

Total Abstinence Pledge

*I, the undersigned, promise, God helping us, never to use intoxicating liquor as a beverage.*

Date	Name	Age	Residence
Nov. 28, 1914.	William Jennings Bryan	54.	Jackson, Mich.

(This is the temperance pledge in Mr. Bryan's own handwriting that he presented to 5,000 boys at Ann Arbor. It will be circulated all over the state by boys of the Y. M. C. A. Mr. Bryan believes that 50,000 Michigan boys will sign with him.—Detroit (Michigan) Times.)

TOTAL ABSTINENCE PAYS

"Panama—Col. Geothals has signed an order placing all persons engaged in canal transportation on a strict temperance basis.

"The order provides that 'all persons employed on the canal who have marine licenses must abstain absolutely from liquor.'

"This includes pilots taking ships through the canal, the captains of tugboats, mates and others."

The above order is another evidence that total abstinence pays. No man can afford to employ a man who drinks—even the moderate use of alcohol impairs one's usefulness, and you never know when the moderate drinker is going to drink to excess. All the drunkards come from the ranks of the moderate drinkers. Some one has described the difference between the moderate drinker and the drunkard as the difference between the pig and the hog—the hog is older than the pig. If a man can not afford to employ one who drinks, can he afford to drink himself? If a man who drinks can not be trusted to conduct a boat through a canal, can he be trusted to look after the welfare of a wife or pilot a family? The temperance movement is growing. Every good force in society is aiding it; are you?  
W. J. BRYAN.

MR. BRYAN CRITICISED

It is not creditable to the New York World, a paper that has never supported Mr. Bryan in any of his campaigns as the democratic nominee for the presidency, and has done what it could to embarrass him and obstruct his administration of the affairs of secretary of state, that it should heckle him at every turn and even refuse to give him credit for good intentions, of which Mr. Bryan admittedly has enough to pave the streets of Lincoln.

The World's ire appears to have been stirred particularly on account of the fact that the World has not been admitted into the full confidence of the state department. Occasionally, as it develops, Mr. Bryan has failed to give out for publicity matters, as it afterwards developed, of no particular consequence.

There is no denying the fact that every de-

partment of the national government has carried caution to the extremity of secretiveness during the last few months. But there has been occasion for this. The United States has occupied a difficult and trying position. In saying little Mr. Bryan has done credit to his position. In saying nothing concerning the war situation he has exemplified the ideal of strict neutrality and preserved the government from the possibility of misunderstanding and misinterpretation.—Nashville (Tenn.) Banner.

Those who kept accurate track of the matter say that not one newspaper paragrapher in ten failed to state that the recent outbreak of the foot-and-mouth disease at certain public markets was very mild compared to what would happen at each of the state capitals where the state legislators are soon to meet.

LEAD US AGAIN

Father, our hopes are bivouacked in our hearts,  
Our fears and prayers are all a-wing to Thee!  
Stretch out Thy holy hand, we humbly ask,  
And lead us with Thy clear, all-solving light  
Out of the desolate darkness of our time,  
As Thou didst in the bleak, black ages gone.  
Give us again the Sight that we may see;  
Once more set spinning all the looms of peace;  
Rekindle the reason, faith, good-will on earth.  
Lord, Thy almighty arm alone can quench  
The fire that girdles all the world with woe.  
Drench Thou the pyre of flesh and bone and blood

Whose glare reflects the stubborn pride of kings  
And shows the fellowship of man at end!  
The flow'r of sturdy nations withers fast,  
And fruits of mellowed genius rot apace  
In shell-swept trench of many battlefields;  
Babes sleep unmothered in their cradle nests,  
While orphaned children weep in wakeful dreams,  
And women robbed of father, husband, son,  
Trudge troubled through the dustclouds of the plow.

Christ did not die upon the Cross for this!

—New York Sun.