

The Commoner

ISSUED MONTHLY

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

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, CHARLES W. BRYAN,
Editor and Proprietor Associate Ed. and Publisher
Edit. Rms. and Business Office, Suite 207 Press Bldg.

One Year \$1.00 Three Months25
Six Months50 Single Copy10
In Clubs of Five or Sample Copies Free.
more, per year.75 Foreign Post, 25c 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 such 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 currency.

RENEWALS—The date on your wrapper shows the time to which your subscription is paid. Thus January 17 means that payment has been received to and including the issue of January, 1917.

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.

Congress seems inclined to make the present generation pay its part of the expenses of the war. That is right; wealth should bear its share.

An optimist is a man who believes that the rich men of the country will give solid support to the proposition that all incomes in excess of \$100,000 a year shall be commandeered for the war chest.

The fact that the nation is at war seems to have induced a number of noisy individuals to believe that everybody who is not as loud-voiced as they are is not as patriotic. They are merely deluding themselves.

If the colonel isn't permitted to lead his 140,000 volunteers into the trenches in Flanders and really must do something, there are many farmers in the middle west who would allow him to deploy his force into their trenches.

If the board of strategy down at Washington runs across any problem that it finds to be impossible of solution, all its members need do is to call up any town in the country and consult the volunteer boards on duty there.

It is now claimed that somebody has invented an electrical machine so delicate that on board a ship it discloses the presence and location of any submerged submarine. What is really needed, however, is a device that can disclose an enemy spy before he gets his eyes to working.

The food speculators and price boosters on the exchanges of the country can be depended upon to solidly approve the proposition to put a limit on the price a farmer may receive for his grain. They have had a lot of experience limiting the price for the producer, but the wheat and corn raisers seem to have run around the end with the ball.

The metropolitan newspapers, which were the largest factors in bringing about the sentiment that made a declaration of war popular in this country, entered very emphatic protests against the proposed censorship as defined by the war college. The metropolitan newspapers are a unit in believing that nobody but their editors have the right of free speech in this country.

A patriot may be defined as a man who is willing to make any sacrifice for his country that common sense or public sentiment dictates is necessary for its success when at war. Under this definition where would you place the brewers and distillers who insist upon running their liquor-making factories in spite of the overwhelming belief and the demonstrated fact that an army's efficiency is seriously impaired as long as liquor is available and that the raw material of foodstuffs that goes into the making of that liquor is needed to save the world from the distress of famine conditions?

National Bulletin Needed

In his address at the banquet tendered to him by prominent democrats at Washington, D. C., December 6, 1916, Mr. Bryan, in enumerating the reforms ripe for action, made the following reference to the need of a national bulletin:

"There is a very pressing need for a means of reaching the voters and informing them in regard to the questions upon which they are to vote. The value of government by the consent of the governed depends largely upon the information those have whose consent is required. Something has been said about the south and the west. My friends, when I speak without restraint my praise of the south and west is even more earnest and more emphatic than the eloquent eulogy of my friend from California. I love the south and the west, and the ideals to which they are attached; but I would do injustice to the east if I told you that the people of the south and west were at heart different from the people of the other sections of our country. It is not a difference in people, it is a difference in their means of information and their environment. In the east, the common man is overshadowed by concentrated wealth that he has not the freedom of expression or action that he has in the west, and then, too, he is the victim of a press that publishes the truth by accident and falsehood by consistently cultivated habit. When I look back over twenty years, and see four hundred thousand democrats in Pennsylvania, and more than that many in New York, and democrats also in every New England state, fighting and fighting and fighting with a courage never surpassed, I wonder how we have ever been able to keep our splendid army together with the poor means we have of furnishing them with the information so necessary for their fight. In campaigns extending over twelve years, I polled almost the same number of votes three times. It was practically six millions and a half of votes three times, and in all that time I never had the support of a predatory corporation or of a newspaper that was under obligation to them. And yet, in spite of all misrepresentation, these men walked up to the polls and voted the democratic ticket year after year. I am grateful to the democrats of the south and west, but I love them no more than I do these brave men of the east who answer the description the Bible gives of those who 'come up through great tribulation.'

"There is no appropriation of money more clearly and fully defensible than an appropriation intended to inform the people of the country in regard to the matters upon which they are to vote. I would like to see the democratic party—a party that believes in discussion, is the champion of free speech, and an advocate of intelligence among the voters—I would like to see that party become the champion of a measure that would put into the hands of every voter a government publication, issued at intervals between campaigns and at shorter intervals during campaigns, with editorial space divided between the parties in proportion to their respective representation in congress, so that every group represented in congress would have a chance to present its principles and its policies to the voters for their judgment at the polls. If in the last campaign we had had such a paper to present our cause to all the people, it would have been worth more to us in votes than our entire campaign fund.

"Someone has made a suggestion—I am not at liberty to give the name of the author of it—that appeals to me, namely, that the newspapers, in return for the valuable privileges that they are given by the post office department, be required in return to give a certain percentage of the space devoted to reading matter to the government for the spread of information among the people who read the papers.

"The first need, I repeat, is a means of informing the public, and I suggest to you that a national bulletin would be in keeping with the spirit of our times; this is a reform imperatively demanded by the present situation."

SOLDIER PRAISES WORK OF Y. M. C. A.

A secretary at El Paso asked a soldier to whom he was writing. "My Pal, back home," was the reply, "want to see what I said?" After the secretary read the letter he asked for a copy. Here it is:

"Camp Stewart, El Paso, Texas, Oct., 1916.
"Dear Pal:

"It's raining tonight; a good night to write letters. I have written to everybody back home and I feel as if you ought to know something about the work of this life saver, the Young Men's Christian Association. You will find it wherever there are men, and there are men here on the border tonight. The 'Y' is here good and strong with a comfortable shack for every brigade.

"Since our shack opened the Mesa Bar and Bill's place are pretty well deserted. Mother gets more letters and the United States government gets more efficiency. If you have loved ones at home, you can't resist the open ink bottles and pens and paper. It makes you ashamed to think that the 'Y' is more interested in your loved ones than you are. It hands you out religion in doses a man can take. It tightens up the halter that gets loose when a man gets away from home. It assures you that some one is interested in you, no matter who, or where you are.

"Who pays? I don't know, but whoever it is, God bless them. They are the fathers of thousands of boys."

OPENS HIS CAMPAIGN IN CALIFORNIA

Southern California welcomes William J. Bryan, returning for a brief visit after a long absence. A great deal of water, indeed, has run under the bridge since the great Commoner here preached the gospel of peace based on reason and justice and cemented by universal arbitration. It is not that he loves peace less, but that he loves his country more that Bryan now devotes the genius of his eloquence to the successful prosecution of the war.

There are few men who have gained so strong a hold upon the affections of the people as has been won by the Nebraskan through years of faithful service. The purity of his character, the nobility of his aims, his devotion to high causes, all have strengthened the influence of this apostle of true democracy. He comes to California preaching the conservation of food supplies and could not render larger help to the common cause than by his espousal of that policy, for henceforth this nation must feed not only its own people but serve as the granary of France and England. If they are starved into submission through any omissions of our own we shall pay dearly.

The address Mr. Bryan delivers tonight at the Long Beach auditorium will be the first of an extended series during which the whole of California will be covered. It is fitting that Mr. Bryan should devote much endeavor to this state, for here the excellence of the climate joins with the fertility of the soil throughout vast areas to make certain the production of vast stores of foodstuffs. Few states of the union through intensive cultivation could yield more profitable response to the emergent demands of this tremendous, soul-searching epoch. If there be evident as yet some seeming lethargy, some lack of full appreciation of the fact that this war must be won in the farms and fields of America no less than in the trenches of Europe, the intelligence and patriotism of our people will rise to the high level of the demand upon them. Aiding in this work to which he has set his hand, Mr. Bryan gives a help greater than if he raised a division of troops for active service.—Los Angeles (Cal.) Tribune.

The government having declared that it will not permit any graft in contracts, it may be reasonably surmised that some of those big corporation managers who have been so vociferous on behalf of war will rise to inquire what's the use?

The dandelion crop seems to be about the only one that we can be real sure of this year. The man of the hour will be the chap who can figure out some way to make it fill the need of the hour.