

## The Commoner.

### Kind But Surprising.

THE COMMONER does not, as a rule, publish the kind of things said about its editor for the reason that he does not desire the paper to appear to be a defender or eulogist of him. Occasionally, however, it becomes necessary to use the paper to defend him against unjust attack, and sometimes a word of commendation is published for the purpose of commenting upon it.

The Topeka Capital recently contained the following editorial:

"The Capital has never had any prepossessions favorable to W. J. Bryan. The issues he has stood for have been the contradiction of everything this paper believes in. His manner and method in campaigns have seemed to us better calculated to divide than unify the country and people, to set section against section and destroy sympathy and sense of fellowship and of common interest between men in one condition of life and men in another condition. We were just beginning as a party in Kansas to see the money question in its true light when Bryan by his eloquence and the fiery inspiration of his personality plunged us into a campaign for which as republicans we were unprepared. The more we saw of his kind of statesmanship the less we thought of it.

"Mr. Bryan's political opinions are no better today than five years or one year ago; but Mr. Bryan's personal character and his patriotism and manly nature as exhibited by his comments and conduct since the assassination of his successful rival have been such as to make every American heart warm to him. His tributes to the late president have been as sincere as they have been just. No man spoke more promptly or more feelingly when the news flashed across the country that the president had been struck down at Buffalo; and no man bowed his head in more honest sorrow when the tidings followed of his death. These manifestations of Mr. Bryan's goodness of heart and patriotism have won him a higher place in the respect of the nation as a man and a citizen than he has ever held in the past."

The kindly spirit which pervades the above editorial is duly appreciated, but attention is called to it for the purpose of asking why Democrats are so misunderstood by their opponents. Certainly republicans had a right to expect, not only from Mr. Bryan but from all Democrats, sincere sorrow at the President's death and indignation at the fact that it came through the act of an assassin. It was to be expected that every patriotic citizen would condemn the deed and the doctrine which led to it, as well as sympathize with the members of the stricken family. Neither should it be a matter of surprise that Democrats entertained a respect for Mr. McKinley's many personal virtues, or were touched by the scenes which attended the closing moments of his life.

Democrats and Republicans differ upon public questions, and Mr. Bryan has always contended that this difference is, for the most part, an honest difference. No one makes a greater mistake than he who assumes that any considerable portion of any party is unpatriotic or bent upon mischief. The Democrats have not attempted to array one class against another. It became necessary to point out the effect of republican policies and, as is always the case, those policies helped some people and injured others. Mr. Bryan never said anything on the silver question more calculated to array class against class than Mr. McKinley, Mr. Blaine,

Mr. Sherman and Mr. Carlyle had said before him.

That a rising dollar is an advantage to the money owner is a self-evident truth, and that it is hurtful to the producers of wealth and to the debtor is equally plain. That a national bank currency is a good thing for the national banker is apparent to anyone, and that it is dangerous as well as expensive to other people ought to be easily understood. The Democrats believe that trusts and imperialism are beneficial to a portion of the people and injurious to the masses. It is impossible to discuss public questions without pointing out the effect of the policies upon the different classes, and no party has ever employed this method of argument more persistently than the Republican party.

Have not the protectionists appealed to the sheep raisers, as a class, and warned them against free wool? Have not the Republicans posed as the special guardians of the wage-earners, and have they not declaimed about the home market? Have they not charged the Democrats with favoring low tariff for the benefit of English manufacturers and against the welfare of American producers? Have not Republican papers contended that Democratic policies would bring idleness to the wage-earners? Did not Mr. McKinley make capital out of a banquet given Mr. Wilson when he visited England? And did he not insist that his party would open the mills, charging inferentially that the Democratic party had closed them?

It is gratifying to know that many republican editors have recently begun to realize what they seem to have ignored, namely, that the Democrats, Populists and Silver Republicans are earnestly endeavoring to secure what they believe to be needed reform. The members of these three parties have co-operated on paramount issues while they differed about minor ones; they have defended their convictions and will continue to defend them, but none surpass them in devotion to their nation's interest or in their support of the constituted authorities.

In view of all that has been said and done, is it not strange that any Republican should be surprised at the words spoken by Mr. McKinley's opponents at the time of the assassination? The editor of THE COMMONER is greatly obliged to the Topeka Capital for its compliment but regrets that any doubt ever existed as to the honesty and sincerity of himself and his supporters in recent campaigns.

### The Farm.

As the daily papers have seen fit to make some comments upon the house which I am building, it may not be out of place to present the facts to the readers of THE COMMONER. In the spring of 1893 I purchased five acres of ground about three miles southeast of Lincoln. The land is situated on the top of a beautiful knoll overlooking the Antelope valley. The view from this spot is unsurpassed; as far as the eye can reach the land is under cultivation and the colors change with the crops and the seasons.

In 1897 twenty acres were purchased ad-

joining the original five, and in 1898 I began improving the place by setting out an orchard and shade trees. Since then, ten acres more have been added so that the farm now consists of thirty-five acres. Our only son is past twelve, and believing that life on a farm will be beneficial to him as well as pleasant to the rest of us, we are now about to realize the plans made years ago.

The first day of October was the seventeenth anniversary of our marriage and the fourteenth anniversary of my removal from Illinois to Nebraska. To celebrate this double anniversary Mrs. Bryan and I went out to the farm on that day and helped to stake off the ground for the house and took out the first shovelfull of dirt. The foundation will be put in this fall so that the house can be completed early next spring. When it is ready for occupancy a picture of it will appear in THE COMMONER—until it is completed the plans are subject to change.

### Piano Trust Collapses.

The Music Trades reports that the scheme to form a trust in the piano industry has collapsed, but it is evident from its editorial that music will lose none of its sweetness thereby. The paper says:

"The trade is not going to easily forget the harassment and anxiety to which it has been put by him and the promoters of this scheme, nor is it likely to easily forget that the scheme he put forth was virtually to hand the industry over to the control of a few commercial houses, which were to do all the business, make all the money, though in so doing they would bring disaster to hundreds of concerns and thousands of their employes.

"There is another aspect to this question which must not be lost sight of, for it has undoubtedly exercised a very serious influence upon the public mind. I refer to the ridiculous statements made by the promoters of the trust through the daily papers with regard to the profits in the piano business. Some of the statements which were put out are really outrageous. It was made known that the public was being robbed by the piano-makers as well as by the dealers, and that if a piano trust were started it would be largely for the benefit of the public, which would be enabled to buy even the most celebrated makes for about half the prices now quoted. How utterly untrue this is we all know, but the effect will remain with the public for years, and it will make the work of every manufacturer and dealer who is trying to sell a piano, at retail, all the harder."

### A Pathetic Appeal.

One of the most pathetic passages in literature is that wherein the father of Absalom gave utterance to that famous plaint over the weakness and the folly of his offspring. One is reminded of that passage by the following appeal made by a republican paper to the trusts:

There is a tendency to raise the prices of all commodities needed for the maintenance of the home that is liable to drive away people who are disposed to settle in Omaha.

There has recently been a very material increase in the price of coal, meat, provisions, vegetables, as well as in rentals, which imposes a hardship upon wage-workers with limited incomes.

While this advance in prices all along the line is largely due to the higher price of the raw products of the farm, orchard and garden, the attempt