

The Commoner.

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THE COMMONER, Lincoln, Neb.

The president's trust busting promises have a regular Ben Davis apple flavor.

Captain Carter should now begin the study of medicine and jump back into army favor.

At least Russia deserves credit for not applying the "thrown into our lap by providence" excuse to Manchuria.

Mr. Cleveland wants a short platform. How would what Judge Parker has said on present-day issues strike him for brevity?

The report that the president said Senator Burton got his deserts is calculated to make the senator bring out that old Jerusalem exhibit letter.

It is reported that a button bearing a "speaking likeness" of Judge Parker has made its appearance in New York. "Speaking likeness" is good.

The impeachment case of Judge Swayne goes over until the next session. Is it possible that the statute of limitations is to be overworked again?

Five hundred people are killed every year at Chicago's grade crossings. And the number will grow until human life becomes more sacred than the dividends of corporations.

The republican Chicago Record-Herald files to the defense of Judge Parker's democracy and reads Mr. Bryan a lecture. The judge's republican and bolting democratic post-convention support seems well nigh unanimous.

Some of Colorado's militiamen claim to be supreme over the civil law. This sort of claim has been growing ever since this country side-stepped all precedent and started on governing alien peoples without their consent.

Speaking of "available candidates" the Savannah Press says: "That is a question for the party to settle." This is encouraging. A little handful of men claiming to be democrats insisted on settling it for the party eight and four years ago.

Governor Pennypacker says he has good reasons for declining a nomination to the supreme bench of Pennsylvania. As the reasons were manufactured by Mr. Quay, we see no reason to doubt their worth from the Pennypacker standpoint.

The Chicago Chronicle says that "the democratic party did not have Mr. Bryan's support in 1892, when it elected Mr. Cleveland." The Chicago Chronicle, acting on the theory that a falsehood well stuck to is as good as the truth, has reiterated that one until it probably believes it.

It is not enough that Messrs. Belmont, Hill, Cleveland, Rothschild, Olney and Lauterbach know where Judge Parker stands on the issues of the day. Democrats who found their democracy on principle, and not on selfish interests, have a right to know before they are asked to give him their support.

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A reader of *The Commoner* asks for the substance of the Elkins law. There is a very general misapprehension as to its terms. It repealed the imprisonment provision of the interstate commerce law, not of the Sherman law. The criminal clause of the Sherman law still stands, but is not enforced. The matter has already been discussed in *The Commoner*, but it is referred to again because there are still many who do not understand.

A reader of *The Commoner* suggests that instead of seeking a questionable victory by surrender and concession the democratic party should trust in the triumph of truth and, paraphrasing Shakespeare, say: "What stronger breast-plate doth democracy desire than a platform with corporate power untainted? Thrice are they armed who have their quarrel just, and they but naked though locked up in steel, whose conscience with injustice is corrupted."

Mr. J. A. Everitt, president of the American Society of Equity, has issued, through the Hollenbeck Press of Indianapolis, a book entitled "The Third Power." The book is dedicated "to the largest class, the most dependent class, the hardest working class, the poorest paid class of people in the world—the farmers." The purpose of the book is to show the importance of the farmer's place in the industrial and political world and to demonstrate what, according to the opinion of the officers of the Society of Equity, the farmers are able to do in their own behalf.

In Mr. Bryan's article on Tolstoy he said that Tolstoy was a believer in Henry George's theory of the land tax. A reader of *The Commoner* and a single taxer criticises the expression, and fears that it will lead to misapprehension. He says that Henry George "never believed in a land tax, but only a tax on the owners of land in direct proportion to the money values of land owned for present use, irrespective of improvements thereon." He insists that a "land value tax" or a "ground value tax" is more correctly expressive of his proposition and that "single tax" is the distinctive term employed.

A correspondent writing to the Carpenter's Journal shows how the republican party has ignored the interests of the laboring man, and then he asks: "And how did we fare under democratic rule when Grover Cleveland was in the White house?" He proceeds to recount the political crimes of President Cleveland. Thus the democratic party is constantly made to bear the sins of Mr. Cleveland's administration, while Mr. Cleveland's influence has been used to help elect republican presidents. Both the Chicago and Kansas City platforms espoused the cause of the laboring man, and it is only fair that laboring men should distinguish between the attitude of the democratic party in recent campaigns and the attitude of the party under Mr. Cleveland.

A reader of *The Commoner* asks when the American people decided against bimetallism. They never decided against it. For about eighty years we had bimetallism with no one opposing it; then silver was demonetized without the public knowing it. Then for twenty years all parties claimed to be in favor of remonetizing silver. In 1896 the republicans pretended to favor international bimetallism, even declaring for it in their platform. After the election was over they claimed a victory for the gold standard. In 1900 they tried to dodge the question of imperialism by shouting "prosperity" and attributing it to the gold standard. They are not now willing to state in their platform the financial policy which they propose to pursue; they dare not submit their financial plans to the people.

A reader of *The Commoner* sends in a circular issued by a republican candidate for county commissioner in an Ohio county. In the circular the candidate makes three propositions for the purpose of securing votes. First, he promises to use his influence to "raise the road to the west side;" second, to "make a present of \$25 to all precincts" that give him a majority for the nomination in case he is elected; third, he proposes "to make a present of \$50 to the precinct" that gives him the banner majority in case he is elected. He does not say how the money is to be expended by the precinct or to whom it is to be turned over, but it is certainly a unique way of purchasing support. And yet the republican party in congress gives not a few dollars, but enormous sums, to the various industries that furnish the campaign fund and coerce voters.

The New York Sun says, and what it says is quoted with approval by the Chicago Chronicle, that Judge Parker has handed down decisions in several labor disputes, and "so far as these decisions have come to our notice, they have been characterized by a good deal of common sense, and plain, straightforward interpretation of the law." Members of labor unions know very well the interest taken by the New York Sun and the Chicago Chronicle in the welfare of organized labor. And organized labor will look with suspicion upon the decisions in labor cases that secure the commendation of these two well known advocates of the D. M. Parry idea of union crushing.

An Albany county, New York, reader asks if the electoral college is obligated to vote for the candidate nominated by the political party. This reader asks: "Could not the electors when they meet to vote for president and vice president legally vote for some other person than the ones for whom they were chosen? Would it be a moral wrong for any elector to cast his vote for a candidate not nominated by his party?" Legally, any elector may cast his vote according to his own pleasure. It is not at all probable, however, that anyone having been chosen to the electoral college for the purpose of casting his vote for a certain candidate would violate his plain moral obligation.

The Minneapolis Journal asks a question which it seems to think unanswerable. "If the democratic party," asks the Journal, "as the democratic leaders openly declare, to be their intention, repudiate the Kansas City platform and turn their backs upon Bryan and Bryanism, what is to become of a profitable publishing business at Lincoln?" The best reply to the Journal query is the story of the little girl who was found standing by the well one morning crying bitterly. "What is the matter, dear?" queried her mother. "O, mamma," wailed the little girl; "I was just thinking that some time I would grow up and get married, and have a little daughter, and that she might crawl over here and fall in the well and be drowned! Boo-hoo." From the infantile Journal to the second generation Journal is a very far cry.

The Cedar Rapids (Ia.) Gazette, referring to President Roosevelt's statement that Elihu Root is the greatest American, and the further statement that he purposed supporting him for president in 1908, asserts that the president is inconsistent. The Gazette says that Mr. Root may not be with us in 1908, and that Mr. Roosevelt should give the country an opportunity to elect its greatest American this year. But the Gazette overlooks that little thing called a "mental reservation." It may be that in referring to Mr. Root as "the greatest American," the president had a mental reservation. Or, perhaps, the president is of the opinion that the people of this country are not yet sufficiently advanced to be trusted with the task of accepting or rejecting his idea of American greatness. Whatever the presidential motive, the Gazette is dangerously near lese majeste when it accuses the president of inconsistency.

Mayor McClellan has refused to issue a permit to tenants of the East Side to hold a parade and mass meeting to protest against the arbitrary increase in rents. He holds that the parade and meeting would perhaps lead to rioting. But why should there be any protest against an increase of rents? Are not landlords entitled to a share of the "wonderful prosperity" that is upon the country? Or is it possible that "prosperity" is confined to those having fixed investments? This protest against extortionate rents recalls to mind the startling fact that there were more evictions for non-payment of rent in New York city last year than there were in Ireland during the three or four years of the greatest activity in that line. Then the great daily papers of America were loud in their denunciations of the cruelty of British landlords, and full of sympathy for the evicted Irish tenants. But you will search these same daily newspapers in vain for any "scare heads" and expressions of editorial sympathy for the evicted tenants of New York city.