

The Commoner.

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A WORD WITH YOU!

THE DEFICIT

The deficit is increasing. For ten months ending with April the treasury deficit was about \$34,000,000, the month of April showing over \$9,000,000.

What is the administration going to do? The deficit last year was charged to the Panama canal purchase. What are they going to charge it to this year, and what is to be done about it? The republican leaders abused the Wilson bill shamefully because (after the income tax was eliminated) it did not raise enough revenue to run the government. What about the Dingley bill? Must we raise the tariff, which is already nearly prohibitive, or will the republicans be driven to a reduction of the tariff in order to increase the revenues, or will they attempt to cut down expenses, and if so, where? Will they reduce the army? If so, they will adopt a democratic policy. Will they reduce the navy appropriations? If so, they will adopt a democratic policy. Or will they be forced to favor the income tax as a means of supporting the government? If so, they will adopt a democratic policy.

Having been forced to accept the democratic position on the trust question, and on the question of railroad regulation, will they now be compelled to adopt the democratic position on the question of taxation? Surely the democrats have reason to rejoice at the vindication of their principles.

THAT FAMOUS HEIFER

Mr. Bryan is again the victim of misrepresentation. He recently bought a hornless Jersey calf at the very reasonable price of \$50, but before the calf could reach Fairview by freight, the republican editors had changed its sex and multiplied the cost by ten. It is now represented as a \$500 heifer, and one of the cartoonists has gone so far as to portray the democratic donkey as objecting to the "golden calf" and saying that either the "\$500 heifer" or it (the donkey) "has got to go!" It is a pity that a farmer must be thus ridiculed when he attempts to improve his stock. It is only a short time ago that he was being held up to public scorn because he, in a jocular mood, said that he had left his plow in the field and hastened to a democratic banquet. This statement was made the text for several sermons on the carelessness of farmers who left their farm machinery exposed to the weather. This was really a just criticism, and the editor of The Commoner has taken it to heart and will in the future be more careful with his plow, but there is no excuse for the gross exaggeration as to the price of the calf.

The Commoner circulates throughout the Union; its readers are to be found in every state, if not in every county, and they embrace all classes, from the richest to the poorest, and include every legitimate occupation.

Let me address a word to the readers.

We have the best country in the world; its natural resources are unsurpassed, and within its borders can be found all that is necessary for the support, and the highest development, of the race. We have a population selected from all other nations and commingling of the various European bloods ought to give us the highest type of man thus far produced. We have the best form of government ever conceived by the human mind—not only the best but the strongest for, in the language of Bancroft, "discarding the implements of terror it dares to rule by moral force and has its citadel in the hearts of men."

With such a country, with such a people and with such a government, we not only enjoy a greater opportunity than has ever fallen to any other nation, but we carry a greater responsibility than any other people have borne. Are we making the most of the opportunity and discharging as we should the obligation imposed upon us? If not, is it not time for careful investigation with a view to applying a remedy for any disease which may afflict the body politic? We find that the natural resources of the country are gradually passing into the hands of a smaller and smaller percentage of the people. The trusts not only plan to exterminate the small competitor, but they are tightening their grip upon the wholesale and retail dealer, binding him by iron-clad contracts and throwing upon him all of the uncertainties and contingencies of trade, and, while they are oppressing the dealer and extorting from the consumer, they

are conspiring to destroy the organizations formed by the laboring man for the protection of his rights.

Municipal corporations have obtained, often by corruption, control of valuable franchises and privileges through which they reap an enormous annual profit, while they monopolize the growth and development of our cities.

The anthracite coal mines are in the hands of a few, and the most conspicuous member of the group brazenly announces that the Creator has made him and his associates trustees for the people. The bituminous coal mines are not yet monopolized to the same extent as the anthracite mines, but the tendency is in that direction.

Nearly all of the great lines of industry are being absorbed by the trusts and the lines of transportation are being consolidated until a handful of men practically control the freight and passenger traffic of the nation. The trusts and the railroads have become so powerful that they do not scruple to put a vast amount of fictitious capital upon the market, and then impudently demand that they be permitted to collect dividends upon their watered stock. The interstate commerce commission, which was appointed to protect the public against unfair rates and discriminations, has been seeking for years to secure an enlargement of its powers, but the railroads have so many of their attorneys in the United States senate that this reasonable request has been thus far denied.

With the closing of the door of opportunity to the wage-earning class, with the denial of legislative relief and with the partiality of some of the federal courts toward organized wealth, have come arrogance on the part of the plutocratic element and desperation on the part of those who feel