

The Commoner.

DEMOCRATIC EDITORS POST THE GOOD WORK

A democratic editor in Alabama writes: "I ran the notice of primary pledge in my editorial column and called attention to it by local notice, asking for pledges, but have received none. There seems to be not the least interest here in public matters, other than where an office is concerned. Anything William J. Bryan undertakes, will have our support, but we can not force the horse to drink."

It will require time to push this great work to completion. Democrats need not be discouraged if it seems difficult at times to arouse interest. The primary pledge plan is growing in popularity and before the work progresses much farther it is safe to say that in every state in the union general interest among democrats will be manifested toward the plan. In the meantime democratic editors and others who are not deterred by discouragement will keep pegging away—a great field is to be covered and a great work will be accomplished, and the field will be covered and the work will be accomplished if every democrat will do his part.

The Nodaway (Missouri) Democrat, published at Maryville and edited by James Todd says: "The Commoner, W. J. Bryan's paper, is urging the primary pledge plan, and it states that responses are coming in from all parts of the country. The people are in favor of the primary. Can any good, true democrat oppose it and be consistent?"

S. F. Parrott, editor of the Cherokee News, published at Gaffney, South Carolina, writes: "As you no doubt know, we have the primary system in this state and all democrats must pledge themselves to support the nominee of the party, from magistrate to president. This state is solid and will be for years to come. There seems to be nothing we can do more than we are doing. We can keep our state in the ranks of the solid south so long as conditions are as they are. It would take a revolution, and a big one at that, to make other than democrats of the white men of this state. Most of those who have gone to the republican party have done so for the office they have or expect to have. If I can do anything to help the cause, command me. Best wishes for the success of the movement."

Thomas T. Waggoner, editor of the Texola (Okla.) Herald writes: "We will be only too pleased to co-operate with you along the line of the primary pledge, and will at all times send you marked copies of the Texola Herald with editorials in the interest of the primary pledge. At any time you think of any thing that might be to the best interest of Jeffersonian democracy, just let us country editors know about it and we will show you how much we 'weigh.' See? Kindest regards and best wishes."

The Clinton (Missouri) Tribune, edited by Lingle and Lingle, says: "In his paper, The Commoner, which should be read by every democrat and republican in the union, Mr. Bryan insists that the first duty of citizenship is to exercise the franchise, and to do that well every citizen should attend the primaries of his party, and help to nominate only the best men for official position and then give them hearty support. This is an important suggestion, and the only way whereby patriotic citizenship can secure and keep control of the machinery of government in any of its departments. The official cormorant, the spell-binders and the grafters are always out in full force, and are often quite difficult to break loose from the public teat. To aid this good cause along Mr. Bryan prints a form of pledge in The Commoner for democrats to sign, pledging themselves to discharge their citizenship duties in this regard. A number of such pledges have already been sent The Commoner from this county and work in the good cause should be kept up."

The Rochester (New Hampshire) Record, edited by Ernest Brown, reproduces the primary pledge form and The Commoner editorial announcing the plan, and says: "The plan with simply a change of the party name would be a good one for every voter in the United States to adopt. The primary caucuses shape the whole party policy and are attended in too many cases by a mere handful of interested men. If every voter had real convictions regarding proper candidates for office and used his efforts to secure true representation of the people there would

be almost a revolution in our government. That is the men elected to office would be men in touch with the people whom they represent and not a part of a political machine whose first care is its own perpetuation and its second to secure profit to its members at public expense for work done for the machine—not for party principles. The man who believes in the fundamental principles of any party will have small chance to vote for these principles on election day unless he attend the primaries of his party. Mr. Bryan's call, therefore, while a call to democrats, is a call for all honest voters to attend the primaries of their party, only Mr. Bryan is taking measures to secure this end in the case of democrats."

The Glasgow Times, published at Glasgow, Ky., and edited by J. M. Richardson, urges the organization of the democratic party along the primary pledge plan.

The Western News, published at Hamilton, Mont., and edited by Miles Romney, reproduces the primary pledge form, and says: "Mr. Bryan is actively engaged in a work of vital importance to the democratic party and that is its re-organization—by the rank and file. The plan is simple. It recognizes the right of the democratic voters to control the policy and determine its position upon public questions of the democratic party. Under this plan it will be utterly impossible for a syndicate again to perpetrate such a fiasco as the Parker campaign of last year. Let each democrat pledge himself to attend all of the primaries of his party to be held between now and the next democratic national convention, unless unavoidably prevented, and to use his influence to secure a clear, honest and straightforward declaration of the party's position on every question upon which the voters of the party desire to speak. Sign the pledge that will be found elsewhere in this issue and forward either to the Western News or direct to The Commoner at Lincoln, Neb., and your name will be enrolled among the democratic hosts who are determined that in 1908 the democratic party shall go before the people with a democratic candidate standing squarely for democratic principles."

The Xenia (Ohio) Herald, edited by George C. Barnes, says: "We have been interested in noting the response from democrats all over the country to the plan of Mr. Bryan for securing the proper attention by the rank and file of the party to the details of the organization. Ever since the plan was broached the pledges have been piling into The Commoner office. From every state and from all walks of life they come, and it is apparent that the conventions leading up to that of 1908 will not be controlled by the opponents of reform. We urge our readers to sign and forward their pledges to attend the conventions and primaries of their party."

The Rico (Colorado) News, edited by George H. Hutt, keeps standing the primary pledge form. In a letter to The Commoner Editor Hutt says: "Under separate cover I am sending you four issues of the Rico News containing the primary pledge, and Mr. Bryan's editorial. Up to this writing no response has been received at this office and I have failed to see notice of any from this immediate vicinity in the list published by The Commoner. I do not look upon this as a discouraging feature, however, as our people are with Mr. Bryan first, last and all the time. They don't deem it necessary to sign pledges."

The Shelby (Mo.) Democrat says: "The Democrat has before called attention to Mr. Bryan's plan to secure pledges from all democrats to attend the primaries of his party, and see that the right men are sent to conventions and thus secure good nominations. The pledge is one every democrat should make and live up to. Mr. Bryan through The Commoner is laying special stress on this plan. If an active democrat will only circulate such a pledge in Shelby he can get plenty of signers and the same way in every neighborhood in this vicinity. Who will undertake this work? There are good democrats in every neighborhood in Shelby and Monroe counties, who could spare time enough to circulate this pledge. A copy may be found in this paper. They might also at the same time get subscriptions for The Commoner. Mr. Bryan is doing a great work through that paper for the people, and all democrats ought to read it."

J. E. Murray, editor of the Markham (Texas) Pilot, in a letter to The Commoner, says: "About your primary pledge plan, I believe it is practical and well suited to do a great work for democracy in the country at large. In my immediate field, however, it can't help much. Too much attention as to be given to maintaining the 'White Man's Union,' for the common individual to look after the state and national democratic party. That is left to small politicians who are many times at variance with the rank and file, as they were in last national contest."

Messrs. Clark and Gass, publishers of the Monroe County News, Albia, Iowa, in a letter to The Commoner say: "We have been running your appeal occasionally for signatures to the pledge, and have strongly endorsed it editorially. Think quite a number of our people have sent their names to you, but so far only the enclosed herewith have responded to us. We think it a grand proposition and sincerely hope it will have the hearty support of every true democrat in the nation. With the rank and file of the party on guard it will be impossible for the 'winners' to repeat the stolen victory that they enjoyed at the St. Louis convention. We shall continue to do what we can to help the proposition along."

The Brown County Advocate, published at Depere, Wis., and edited by Heyrman and Key-pers, reproduces the primary pledge and calls upon its readers to co-operate.

The South-east Missourian, published at New Madrid, Mo., and edited by W. V. Waters, keeps standing the form of the primary pledge, and in a letter under date of May 26 Mr. Waters says: "I am willing to help the cause in any way I can."

Charles Purnell, editor of the Independent Democrat, published at North Platte, Neb., gives cordial commendation to the primary pledge plan.

D. M. and J. E. Hamlin, editors of the Democrat-Herald, published at Newkirk, Okla., write: "Enclosed with this letter you will find several primary pledges duly signed. We heartily approve of this plan, believing if those democrats who have been derelict in attending primaries heretofore can only be made attend, the party will have no further trouble with the 'safe and sane' element. Regardless of what any other state may do you can pin your faith to Oklahoma. In case statehood is secured before next election, which will let out the true spirit of Oklahoma, the democratic democrats will have no complaint of her attitude. Best wishes for the success of this undertaking."

The Delta Courier, published at Cooper, Texas, and edited by J. F. Custer, says: "The test proposed by William J. Bryan in The Commoner is a pledge on the part of every democrat to attend all the primaries of the party held between now and the next national election, and endeavor to see that a platform is adopted in conformity with honest, straightforward democratic principles. No member of the party, it seems to us, could object to such a proposition. In the first place, we know that only a small per cent of democrats participated in the primaries in many localities last year. And in the general election the result was a pitiful dwindling away of the party's vote. While we have no excuses to make for supporting Parker, that seeming at the time the only alternative for pacifying the disgruntled east, yet in advocating his nomination we, like many other democrats, paid a very high price for very poor fiddling. The east should have been let go. Six million men shamefully knuckled under to a few thousand 'beefing,' bullying, treacherous eastern bosses who couldn't carry a precinct. They were 'deader' than their most uncompromising enemies charged them with being. Even the populists had more vitality. The lesson democrats should take to heart is that compromises are wrong and usually unprofitable. The great democracy is not a gold standard party and will not follow in the wake of avowed gold standard advocates. If it is thought the unconditional free coinage is 'inexpedient' just now, men can at least demand the use of both gold and silver as standard money, the coinage being proportioned to the demand for each. For our part we believe in more silver and less bank paper. The eastern democracy has frozen itself to death hanging around the back door of the republican kitchen."