

Editorials By Commoner Readers

Henry Haubens, Omaha, Nebr.—I hope that a way may be found to place The Commoner to a greater extent in the hands of the general public. A good many of the middle and working class would take the paper and enjoy and profit by reading it, if the men could be reached personally. Perhaps those who have access to the list of voters in each precinct could secure a list of the doubtful voters who should be supplied with The Commoner and if need be, paid for through the funds of those who are willing to make a little sacrifice for the good of the cause. I am already paying for six subscribers so that the paper may be read by certain parties whom I know to be partisan to such an extent that they would not pay for a paper representing views opposite from those now entertained by them. I am willing to pay for five more subscriptions to be sent where they will do the most good.

L. T. Johnson, Shenango Forks, N. Y.—I have been a democrat all my life. At one time I thought a great deal of Grover Cleveland and David B. Hill. I discovered Grover would not do about the middle of his last administration. I cut David B. Hill's name out when he arose in the senate to oppose the income tax. I have a particularly high opinion of William Randolph Hearst and I want to say to you, in my opinion, he will be the next governor of New York by the largest majority ever given a governor in that state. They are trying to prevent his nomination, but even if they succeed, he could run independent and be elected, for I do not think the people of New York would stand for another steal, as they did at the mayoralty election last fall. Mr. Editor, you recently threw some bouquets at Mr. Roosevelt. Please do so no more. I am sixty-two years of age and with the good Lord's permission, I hope to live long enough to see a democrat in the white house. Best wishes for The Commoner's success.

L. W. Beaman, Sterling, Kansas—I fully concur in the "Barber Shop Fund" suggested by Mr. G. W. Conrath of Bowling Green, Ohio. I am ready and willing to place one year's subscription in one of our best shops here as soon as authorized to do so, and will consider I have done a good deed, and like bread cast upon the waters, it will return many days hence..

William Garrison, Pond Creek, Okla.—I enclose copy of two clippings from an old scrap book that might be read now with some interest. I have many more when you have room for them. One of these clippings is an extract from the speech delivered by William E Gladstone at Leeds in 1880. Mr. Gladstone said: "I will say this, as long as America adheres to its protective system—your commercial supremacy is secure. Nothing in this world can take it from you while America fetters her own strong hands and arms, and with those fettered arms is content to compete with you who are free in neutral markets." The other clipping refers to a speech delivered by William Lloyd Garrison at Hyannis. Referring to the fact that the civil war had been ended twenty-five years, Mr. Garrison said: "Still, to the minds of many the war is not yet over, and the same excessive

taxation that only the most devoted patriotism could then bear for the country's sake, sits fixed upon our shoulders like the old man of the seas. The party whose noblest exemplars deplored the burden which patriotism willingly assumed, now makes it an article of faith that they shall be continued. At the expense of the industries and labors of the people, an enormous and dangerous surplus threatens the welfare and the morals of the government. It invites the schemes of plunder and wastefulness. It demoralizes public sentiment and debauches public men. Its connection paralyzes the natural industries of the United States and prevents the existence of occupations that without its withering touch would spring up in the night like Jonah's gourd. The system that produces this is outtraced with defenses as hollow as they are plausible. They are built to deceive. A protective tariff is simply a restrictive tax. It is paid by the people it especially pretends to benefit. You are asked to believe that a tax enriches. Your good sense tells you that it has only the power to impoverish. It may enrich a few; it certainly impoverishes many."

Leroy Miller, Albia, Iowa.—After investigating the packers at Chicago, Mr. Garfield reported they were making ninety-nine cents on a steer and 2 per cent on the capital invested in their business. This was intended to silence the "hayseeds" and grangers and the sporadic "bellowing" of the cattlemen about the awful exactions of the beef trust. And, remember, too, it was a close shave that they escaped an actual financial collapse, for one was impressed with the idea that the packers, after all, were in business simply for exercise and the fun there is in it. They confided to Mr. Garfield that when they began operations on a steer he was very much gross, and it was only by diligently caring for all the odds and ends that they realized a profit of ninety-nine cents. They wanted the public to understand that by utilizing all the waste, by saving all the hide and horns, hair and hoofs, soap-grease and unassimilated hay and cornfodder, they were just ninety-nine cents ahead, no more and no less. They divulged a secret no less startling than that on the millions that they have invested in their plants, in their private car lines and private meat shops all over the country, they realized a little, measly 2 per cent, and that only by saving everything but squeals, grunts and vacuums were they able to do that well. The people were thus made cognizant of the fact that the packing business was very much "run down at the heel." They were made aware of a very wretched state of affairs and the charitably inclined were getting ready to pass the hat and to bring in something to temporarily allay a bread riot among the packers. But just then something happened. These suffering packers were indicted because they had a corner on insolvency. They claimed they were immune from prosecution on evidence which they had voluntarily given, which showed that by scraping up all the hair and toenails they made ninety-nine cents on a steer. They also claimed immunity because they had confessed that they made a profit of 2 per cent out of fertilizers, nitrogen and gristles. But Judge Humphrey dismissed the packers without a trial, and he did right. It would have been like striking a woman to have punished them. It was the rankest kind of nonsense to attempt sending them to the penitentiary on evidence that would send them to the poor house.

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