

# THE THANKSGIVING SEASON

As The Commoner reaches the subscriber this week, his thoughts will be occupied with the Thanksgiving season and much reason have we all to be grateful. No doubt each reader of The Commoner has had during the past year more or less of joy and sorrow. Good crops have come to most of the toilers upon the farm and reasonable prosperity to those who labor in the factory and the market place. Most of the readers of The Commoner have had good health, for health is the rule and sickness the exception. Into some homes sorrow has come; into a few death has entered. While the grim reaper is never a welcome guest, we are all conscious of the possibility of his summons at any time, and we reconcile ourselves to the loss of loved ones, placing the delights which they have brought to us against the grief caused by their departure from us.

It is not possible for the editor of The Commoner to know each individual case and to offer congratulations to those who have been especially blessed or to comfort those who mourn, but he takes this opportunity to call attention to the large blessings which all have received and which ought to excite in each a feeling of gratitude appropriate to Thanksgiving day.

When we separate the things which have come to us without effort or even volition upon our part from the things we have done for ourselves, we find little ground for vanity. We are so largely the creatures of environment and so greatly indebted to others for what we have and are that reflection teaches humility.

Were we born in the United States? It was a kind providence that cast our lot here and gave us a heritage and government formed by the forefathers and handed down to us as a costly and yet priceless treasure.

Were we born in comfortable homes? Let us return thanks for the good fortune that surrounded us in infancy with the things which we needed for sustenance and development.

Have we had the advantages of education? Let us acknowledge our indebtedness to those who

established our school systems, public and private; to our parents who, knowing the advantages of intellectual training, sent us to school, and to our teachers, who gave us the benefit of instruction and discipline.

Were we reared in Christian homes or in homes where high ideals were presented to us in youth? If so, let us estimate the influence which birth and early training have had upon our lives and we will recognize how deeply obligated we are to parents and to friends for the conceptions of life which have enabled us to improve our opportunities.

How can we repay the debt? It can not be repaid as a loan of money can, for those who gave us free government are dead. Our teachers are not, as a rule, within our reach. Those who have inspired us by high ideals are in most cases gone to their reward and the parents of the majority of the readers of The Commoner have also been called home, but if payment can not be made to those from whom we have directly received benefits, it can be made to those about us and to society at large. We can help those who have been overcome by misfortune and thus prove our gratitude for the comforts of life. We can labor to protect the government from assaults within as well as from assaults from without. We can strive to keep it a government of the people, by the people and for the people. We can contribute to the maintenance of schools and to the encouragement of teachers, and we can devote ourselves to the wise solution of the problems that confront our generation.

There is no lack of work to be done where there is a will to do it. Every day presents its opportunities, and with its opportunities it presents responsibilities. He whose heart is right will never be idle, for the willing hand can always find employment.

Thanksgiving day will have served its purpose if the retrospect which it presents spurs us on to the more conscientious performance of duty and to increase our contribution to the welfare of the world and the sum of human happiness.

## Now It Is Something Else

The following interesting bit of literature is going the rounds of the daily press under the caption, "Wages and Competition," and is credited to "Wall Street Bulls and Bears." The article itself may be taken as representing the views of the average Wall Street financier as well as the average manufacturer who is very insistent on being "protected against foreign competition."

"It is a nice thing to read in the papers every morning that some body of industrious workmen are to have a raise in wages. It is good to note that the fruits of prosperity are being distributed to labor and capital alike, but there is one feature about this increase in wages that should not be overlooked. This country has reached a position where it must seek out for a greater share of the world's foreign trade. The only way we can wedge our way into the world's markets is by underselling the foreigners. We can not undersell the foreigners unless we can manufacture as cheaply as they can. We have a great advantage over them in this regard in the use of machinery. Wages are not so large an item in our manufacturing costs as they are abroad but when wages rise to too high a plane in this country our manufacturing costs become so great that our use of superior machinery does not make up for the difference in wages here and abroad. The higher wages go in this country, the less chance we have of selling our goods in the foreign markets."

Trust the average beneficiary of a protective

### DEMOCRATIC GAINS IN INDIANA

As the complete returns come in, the democrats find increasing reason for rejoicing. Take the state of Indiana, for instance: in 1904 the republicans carried eleven of the thirteen congressional districts, and in those districts the republican candidates had an aggregate majority of 78,905. The democrats carried two districts, and their candidates had an aggregate majority of 5,514. Subtracting the democratic majority in two districts from the republican majority in

eleven districts leaves a net republican majority of 73,391 to the credit of the republican party in its congressional fight. This year the republicans carried nine of the congressional districts but by majorities so reduced that the aggregate majority in the nine districts was only 16,366. The democrats carried four districts with an aggregate majority of 9,719. When the democratic majority in the four districts is subtracted from the republican majority in the nine districts, it leaves a net republican majority of 6,647 in the state, if the victory is to be measured on the

tariff to look out for himself, even if he has to twist his logic in order to make out his case. A few years ago he asked for protection against foreign competition in order that he might make enough profit to pay good wages to the American employe. Then, when the tariff wall was so high the foreigner could not get his work through it or over it, the American employer reduced wages whenever he saw fit and raised prices to suit his own pleasure. By the time the trades unions were strong enough to secure some measure of justice, the employer had enough money to warrant him in looking for further fields to exploit. He discarded the old "home market" cry which had performed valiant service for years, and is now shrieking about "extending our foreign trade." But in the new order of things he has reversed himself. Instead of founding his case on the plea that he wants to be able to pay the American workman good wages, he is now declaring that wages must be reduced in order that American made goods can be sold in foreign markets in competition with foreign made goods. It is a beautiful scheme by which to make a conquest of the foreign markets. Says he: "Let us have a high tariff in order that we may charge the home consumer all the traffic will bear, and then let us reduce wages to the starvation point, then we can undersell any and all competitors in the foreign field and thus become masters of the world's trade."

The devious logic of the high tariff advocate is something wonderful to behold.

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congressional contest. In three of the republican districts the successful candidate had less than 400 majority, and in another district the republican majority was less than 1,000, and in two others less than 1,600. If the trend toward the democratic party continues for the next two years, Indiana is a democratic state, and we can confidently expect to win in from eight to ten of the congressional districts.

Take the legislative contest in Indiana and the result is almost equally encouraging. While the representation in the state senate has fallen off one, it being fourteen to thirty-six in 1904 and thirteen to thirty-seven this year, the democratic representation in the house has increased from twenty-one democrats and seventy-nine republicans in 1904 to forty-seven democrats and fifty-three republicans in 1906. As a result of the present election the democrats are within four of having a majority of the lower house.

Let us examine still another evidence of democratic growth. President Roosevelt carried Indiana by 93,944 while the republican state ticket was elected this year by less than 31,000, a gain of 63,000.

When it is remembered that this is the state of Vice President Fairbanks and that he, as an active candidate for the presidency, stumped the state of Indiana in the recent campaign, it must be apparent to anyone that the democrats have really gained a great victory. With the sentiment growing as it is in favor of democratic ideas, our party can confidently count on Indiana in 1908 if an honest, straightforward fight is made for democratic principles.

### SPEAKING OF ISSUES

Speaking of the issues of the campaign of 1908 the El Paso (Texas) Times says: "Mr. Bryan says that government and municipal ownership will be the dominant issue in 1908. It is possible that the distinguished Nebraskan's expectation of being the dominant factor in the democratic party may not materialize in which event the dominance of his views will also fail of materialization."

The El Paso Times also says a great deal more of a similar nature. But as Mr. Bryan has never said that government and municipal ownership would be the dominant issue in 1908 it may not be deemed necessary to dwell at length on what the El Paso Times says in that connection. But when a newspaper claiming to be democratic proceeds to give advice to the democratic party, it may not be considered improper to ask it to explain just what it means. The El Paso Times says: "On the contrary, if we may judge by the results and tendencies of republican policies, the sensible thing for democracy to do, the thing which it will do, is to turn its face to the old landmarks in its history and the oldtime doctrines of its faith and get as far away as possible from republican doctrines, republican innovations in economic measures, and as near to simplicity and to the people as possible."

Will the El Paso Times do its democratic readers the favor to explain just what it means by turning its face "to the old landmarks in its history?" Will it kindly diagram a few of those landmarks? Will it kindly outline a few of the "old doctrines" of which it speaks and by inference declares the present day democracy to have abandoned? It is all very well to criticize and generalize, but just now democrats are in a mood to demand something specific.

### THE SARCASTIC SENTINEL

As Silas Wegg occasionally dropped into poetry, so does the Milwaukee Sentinel "speak sarkastik" as was the habit of Artemus Ward. Referring to the New York Independent's recent eulogy of Elihu Root the Sentinel opines that the Independent was thinking of Root in connection with a presidential nomination in 1908 and says: "But availability! There's the rub. Mr. Root, being a great lawyer, has had retainers from corporations—just as Abraham Lincoln had."

Surely no one will gainsay the declaration that this is the acme of sarcasm. But the Sentinel overreaches itself. Its comparison of Root and Lincoln and the corporations which paid them retainers is very unfortunate.

There is just as much difference between Elihu Root and Abraham Lincoln as there is between the corporations which retained Lincoln and those which retain Elihu Root—with Lincoln at the big end of one combination and Root at the little end of the other.