AUGUST, 16, 1907

## The Commoner.



Hot Springs, Ark., August 12 .-- proud of it, he'll feel badly, for it Once more the writer is hobnobbing was Bill that gave him the first word This was done, with the result that with the "pals" of other days-the of encouragement as a "tourist" at printermen. The older the architect Rockport, Mo., in the fall of '83. My. of this department grows the better my, but that was a long time ago! he likes to foregather with the union printers in international convention assembled and indulge in reminiscences. Where a bunch of old-time printers is assembled, there you will be sure to find that fraternity which maketh for jollity, and the good will that maketh for lasting friendships. The great feature of this convention of printers is the "Old Pirate's Reunion." And thereby hangs a tale that to be enjoyed needs some elucidation.

"Missouri River Pirates" The composed that pioneer band of union printers that worked along the Missourl river in the early days from 1877 to 1883, preaching unionism wherever they stopped, and reviving the spirit of local union men who had grown discouraged. Unions had been established at Atchison and St. Joseph even before the war, but the war, and the panic of 1873 caused them to lose their charters, and unionism was at a low ebb when good times began in the late 70's. Then it was that the "Pirates" began working along the river-Kansas City, Leavenworth, Atchison, St. Joseph, Council Bluffs, Omaha, Sioux City, and cities lying not far inland. The result was a renewal of unionism that blazed into success, and now every city of 15,000 in the Missouri valley is organized, the printers drawing top wages and are work- lington hotel yesterday. People incapacited from work, he can go to ing the eight hour day.

started to learn the printer's trade lucky, careless class of craftsmen, the land in a home that is a home about the time the "Pirates" were should have been present at the re- in all that the name implies, surin their glory, and among the most ception. He would have seen a rounded by a veritable garden, and pleasant recollections of his life are bunch of as fine looking men as he in sight of the eternal peaks of the G. H. WALTERS, Lincoln, Nebr those concerning the "tourists" who could locate in a year's search. Fact Rocky Mountains. And for this innever lost an opportunity to drill is, they looked like a bunch of bank- surance he pays the enormous tax unionism into his youthful mind. ers, or lawyers, or Wall Street finan- of ten cents a month, or \$1.20 a year. The result was that as soon as he ciers. Some of them are getting After you have let this fact soak into had served the requisite apprentic- along in years, but the majority of your mind perhaps you can begin to ship he hiked to the nearest union them are comparatively young men. realize what a soft snap the mantown and became a full fledged They are jollifying, for this is the agers of the big "life" insurance union printer. But he started on the first convention held since the win- companies have had for the past road about the time the glory of the ning of the bitter fight for the eight fifty or a hundred years. "Pirates" was fading, and it never hour day. That fight was begun on was his lot to be counted one of January 1, 1906, and since that time them.

Uncle Sam is quite a prominent citizen in Hot Springs. He maintains a bath house here for those who can not afford private baths, and he also maintains a reservation which is cared for just like Uncle Sam cares for all his parks. The springs are good for any old ailment. They will relieve a man of about everything, and the hotels attend to relieving us of the rest. Met a gentleman yesterday evening who said that he had shot himself full of chloride of gold in an effort to get rid of the drink habit, but without success. But he came down here, boiled himself in the baths for a couple of weeks and is now all right. "They got the gold out of my system, and out of my pockets, too," he said.

There is only one bad feature about a visit to Hot Springs, and that is the sight of so many sufferers who are here for help. But even that has its bright side, for the man who has health and strength can not look on them without returning thanks for his manifold blessings. A man who has health and strength and a good digestion never knows how well off he is until he sees some poor, unfortunate who lacks all those things.

A reception was held at the Arwho have an idea that printers are the Union Printers' Home at Colo-The architect of this department a dissipated, forlorn, happy-go- rado Springs and live on the fat of the 45,000 union printers of the conventions is the increasing numcountry put up over \$3,000,000 in ber of women who attend. The the plane THE REPORT OF THE

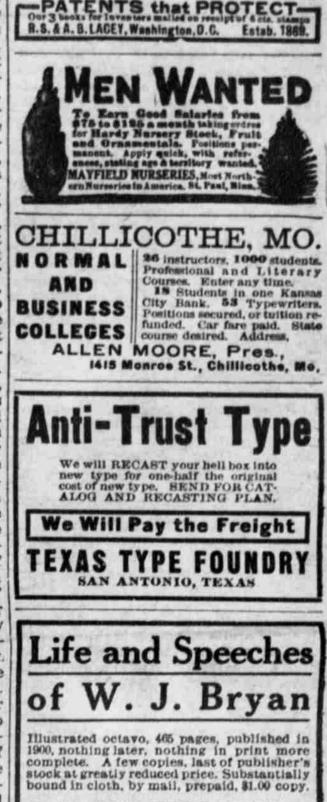
though it has been fifteen years since he worked at the case.

Speaking about the Union Printers' Home at Colorado Springs brings to mind the fact that this Home contains one of the finest libraries in the United States. Two years ago James Monroe Kreiter, a member of Columbia Typographical Union, Washington, D. C., conceived the idea of having every visitor to the Colorado Springs convention in 1906 bring a book for the Home. the library was enriched by something like 2,000 volumes. Then B. Frank Swigart of St. Louis Typographical Union, got into the game and began writing authors, publishers, statesmen and everybody else, telling them about the Home and its library, and asking for donations. The result is that the library now contains upwards of 8,000 volumes, many of them priceless. President Roosevelt contributed a complete set of his books, autographed. Emperor William of Germany is on the list, and his imperial signature looms up on the fly leaves of the books he sent. King Edward VII of Great Britain and Ireland, contributed autographed books of great value. Every cabinet office is represented, every justice of the United States supreme court is represented, and Mark Twain sent in a set of his books with a characteristic dedication, for Mark is an old-time printer. The library today, apart from its sentimental value, is worth not less than \$30,000, and now the printers are going to assess themselves and raise enough money to build a library annex to the Home. The writer of this department carries quite a bunch of what people call "life insurance," and the fruits of which he can never enjoy. It costs him a lot of money every year, too. But in the Typographical Union he has insurance. that simply can not be beaten. He donesn't have to die to get it, either. If ever he becomes crippled, ill or A growing feature of these annual But the "Pirates" are gathering cold cash to secure victory. During printers are getting into the habit thoroughly enjoyed, and some of the features that used to mark the conventions in the writer's early printall of which the rank and file is duly delegates on the floor of the convention. They are a splendid cre lit to the craft, too. Here is a good thing to remember about the Typographical Union: Whenever you see a woman working at the case or on a machine in a union composing room you know she is getting the same



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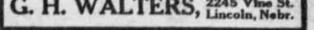


here from the four quarters of the the struggle not one union printer of bringing their wives along, and earth, and they are going to have a so far as known was arrested on any the result is beneficial in more ways reunion that will go down in union charge of violence, although three than one. The social times are more printer history. It will be held Wed- or four were arrested and fined for nesday, long before this shall reach contempt of court, the contempt con-The Commoner readers, but next sisting in ignoring a judicial order week we'll tell you all about it- not to assert their rights as free born ing days have been eliminated-for that is, most all about it. Just as American citizens. The general pubsoon as this letter is finished the lic heard very little about the eight thankful. There are several women writer is going out to hunt up Ben hour strike, for the reason that it Hill, foreman of the St. Joe Gazette, was so quiet the daily newspapers for it was under Hill's supervision could not make any news features that the writer set up his first line out of it. Now, after less than two of type on a mornin; newspaper, years of battling for the short work 'way back in '83. He expects to day, the International Typographical meet "Red" Hill, the old proof read- Union has more money in its treaser on the Omaha World-Heral, who ury than it ever had at one time beonce marked Webster's Dictionary fore, it has more men working the rate of wage as the men. "Equal when a compositor called him down eight hour day than it ever had pay for equal work," is one of the for a correction and offered old Noah working the nine hour day, and while Typographical Union's slogans. as ocular demonstration. He ex- financing this battle the printers pects to see "Gig" Martin, who al- maintained their splendid Home at ways comes into town "by hand." Colorado Springs, where 150 aged day's "business" to begin. First He'll look for Dixie Dunbar who, and invalid printers are cared for as comes the "German lunch," which disgusted with his gas jet put on his they deserve to be. When a man is now about ready to serve. Then coat and started out of the office to thinks of all these things he has a comes a balloon ascension, followed "ketch some lightnin' bugs to dissi- right to be proud of the fact that he by a visit to the alligator and ostrich pate this gloom." If he doesn't meet has carried a union printer's card for farms. This will be followed by a Bill Boyer, Native Missourian an' nearly a quarter of a century, even vaudeville entertainment. So the - TOWNER .

It is pretty nearly time for the

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