

# The Commoner.

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

VOL. 7, NO. 45

Lincoln, Nebraska, November 22, 1907

Whole Number 357

## CONTENTS

TARIFF FOR REVENUE  
STOP THE GAMBLING  
LET THE PEOPLE RULE  
INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION  
GOVERNMENT BY INJUNCTION  
DOORS THAT OPEN  
GOVERNORS' CONFERENCE AT ATLANTA  
THE STORY OF JOHN R. WALSH  
WASHINGTON LETTER  
COMMENT ON CURRENT TOPICS  
HOME DEPARTMENT  
WHETHER COMMON OR NOT  
NEWS OF THE WEEK

## THANKSGIVING, 1907

I thank Thee, Lord, that through the year  
Rich blessings have around me spread;  
That though some days seemed dark and drear  
The sun some gleams of splendor shed.  
I thank Thee, Lord, for strength of arm  
To toll for those within my care;  
For Thy great love that saved from harm  
And blessings gave in richest share.  
For all Thy blessings on life's way  
I thank Thee this Thanksgiving Day.

I thank Thee, Lord, as one by one  
The days sped to eternity,  
Each evening's low descending sun  
Left loved ones here to welcome me.  
I thank Thee, Lord, when day's work o'er  
And footsteps turned to home and rest,  
That childish welcomes at the door  
Made ev'ry passing moment blest.  
For all these joys I gladly pay  
My tributes this Thanksgiving Day.

I thank Thee, Lord, that each day's dawn  
Was ushered in with hope and cheer;  
That each day's sun could shine upon  
Life's path devoid of thorn or tear.  
I thank Thee, Lord, for soft caress  
Of childish fingers on my face;  
For love that left, through storm and stress,  
Around my board no vacant place.  
For blessings spread about my way  
I praise Thee this Thanksgiving Day.

I thank Thee, Lord, for all the friends  
Whose cheery welcomes make life sweet;  
For love that all my way attends,  
And makes my happiness complete.  
I thank Thee, Lord, for hands stretched out  
To clasp my own in friendship warm;  
For hope that puts to flight each doubt  
And haven gives in ev'ry storm.  
For all Thy goodness on life's way  
I praise Thee this Thanksgiving Day.  
—Will M. Maupin.



Isn't it strange that the gentleman who, in '96 was so terribly frightened at the thought of a "fifty cent dollar" is now begging so earnestly for a no-cent dollar?

## TARIFF FOR REVENUE

It is now one hundred and fifteen years since the tariff question became a subject of debate, and there has scarcely been a year in all that time when there was not more or less discussion of it. In 1791 Alexander Hamilton submitted his report on manufactures; some forty years later Henry Clay became the leading advocate of a tariff system avowedly protective; thirty years afterward the republican party committed itself to a protective tariff and has since been a strenuous supporter of the doctrine.

Nearly every prominent man in our political history has been identified with one side or the other of the controversy, and a few have been on both sides. Webster, for instance, changed his position out of deference to his manufacturing constituents.

Different arguments have been presented from time to time in support of a protective tariff, but none of those which have been most influential can now be urged in defense of a tariff expressly designed for the purpose of shielding American manufacturers from foreign competition. As freedom of trade is the natural condition, and restrictions upon exchange an arbitrary interference with the liberty of the individual, the advocate of a protective tariff has upon him the burden of proof to show, first, that it is right in principle; second, that it is wise in policy, either generally or under special circumstances; and, third, that it is necessary to the extent that it is asked.

As a matter of fact, the champion of protection, at least the modern champion, has never attempted to establish any one of the three. The principle involved, namely, the right of the government to tax one man for the benefit of another, is habitually ignored. The doctrine that the government can use the taxing power to take money from one man and turn it over to another man for a private purpose is an indefensible one. The supreme court of the United

States (20 Wall. 657) has taken what must be accepted as an unassailable position when it says:

"To lay with one hand the power of the government on the property of the citizen, and with the other to bestow it upon favored individuals to aid private enterprises and to build up private fortunes, is none the less a robbery because it is done under the forms of law and is called a taxation. This is not legislation. It is a decree under legislative forms.

"If it be said that a benefit results to the local public of a town by establishing manufacturers, the same may be said of any other business or pursuit which employs capital or labor. The merchant, the mechanic, the innkeeper, the banker, the builder, the steamboat owner, are equally promoters of the public good and equally deserving the aid of the citizens by forced contributions. No line can be drawn in favor of the manufacturer which would not open the coffers of the public treasury to the importunities of two-thirds of the business men of the city or town."

To avoid the force of this objection, it has been argued, first, that the tariff is not a tax upon the consumer; and, second, that it is laid for a public purpose. Those who insist that it is not a tax upon the consumer claim that the foreigner pays the tax for the privilege of selling his goods in this country, or that while the immediate effect may be to raise the price of the protected article, the ultimate effect is to cheapen production at home through the creation of domestic competition. The theory that the foreigner pays the tax is so unsubstantial that one may well be astonished at its longevity. If it were true, a protective tariff would be impotent to protect, provided it really cost more to manufacture a given article in this country than abroad. If, for instance, the manufacturer of woolen goods asks for a fifty per cent duty on the ground that it costs him a dollar and a half