

The Commoner.

ISSUED WEEKLY.

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THE COMMONER, Lincoln, Neb.

The best fire drill for school houses is the fire proof school building.

The Aldrich currency bill could be further improved by striking out all after the enacting clause.

Chicago's police seem much better at suppressing free speech than they are detecting crime.

Captain Winslow says the armor plate is too low. But Captain Winslow was not referring to the price.

The indications are that Count Abruzzi's matrimonial plans have wound up a good deal like his name sounds.

Mexican newspapers need not worry. Uncle Sam never steals territory. He merely lets Providence toss it into his lap.

Did it ever strike the traffic managers of the Harriman roads that they might retaliate by raising the rate on Teddy bears?

Having passed the ship subsidy bill the "standpatters" can point to the fact as another reason why the tariff must be maintained.

If reports from the navy's target practice are true there is no reason why Japanese spies should create consternation by their presence.

The Ohio-Iowa republican tariff planks simply mean that the republicans can not revise the tariff before election and will not after election.

The Philadelphia Telegram says: "Pennsylvania wants a man in the senate." There are a number of democrats in Pennsylvania who will fill the bill.

If those Japanese emissaries really want to study thoroughly all of our defense plans they will have to visit something like twelve million American homes.

The German reporters who struck in order to revenge themselves on the lawmakers have a lot to learn about how to play even with recreant public officials.

By sending contesting delegations to the Chicago convention several of the southern states manage to find places for their entire republican membership.

THE METHODS OF 1896 AGAIN

The following editorial is taken from the Omaha World-Herald:

History is repeating itself. In the campaign of 1896, when it was apparent that, unless extraordinary effort was made, Bryan would be elected, the trust and tariff grafters of the country posted notices in the factories, on the Saturday preceding election, that the mills would close indefinitely the following week unless the returns showed McKinley's election. This outrageous act of intimidation was what defeated Bryan. Labor was clubbed into voting as a serf would vote, and the predatory wealth of the republic got its golden opportunity. It is since 1896 that the great majority of the trusts have been organized, and every year they have reaped vaster and vaster profits by robbing the consumer.

Now, it appears, the same methods are resorted to by the high financiers to compel labor to support, and even petition congress for, the passage of the Aldrich bill, a measure designed to give high finance absolute control of the money of the nation.

Thomas T. Osterman, editor of the Blair (Neb.) Democrat, sends to the World-Herald a cheap bribe offer made him by the "Keystone news bureau" of Philadelphia, which "bureau" has been already commented on in these columns. The "bureau" writes him as follows:

"Editor: If you care to use the appended article we will be glad, upon the receipt of a marked copy of your paper, to send you \$1 to pay for the cost of typesetting."

This is signed by the "Keystone News Bureau, P. O. Box 1014, Philadelphia, Pa."

The story that it is sought to buy country editors into publishing for a dollar note is to run under a Washington date line. It declares that "unexpected support" for the Aldrich bill is coming from "leading labor men throughout the country," and that this support is "expected to win many votes in the house." The reason labor is for the bill, the story proceeds, is that "many workmen are idle" and they realize "how little prospect of employment there is during the next several months" unless the Aldrich bill is passed! It proceeds to tell of a labor delegation calling on a prominent Washington banker to ask for aid in financing a million dollar labor temple. The banker "told his callers that he would be unable to aid materially, pending action in congress on the Aldrich currency bill." And he is quoted as saying:

"Without financial legislation this year will find not only a million but millions of unemployed."

The article winds up in this cheerful manner:

"As an outcome the labor men said they would immediately see their representatives in congress, and use their utmost influence in behalf of the proposed currency legislation."

How do you like it, editors who are offered this dollar bribe?

How do you like it, laboring men who are to be clubbed into helping the master robbers get even a closer and surer stranglehold on the finances, industry and business of the country?

How do you like it, merchants, debtors, honest bankers, farmers, when you see the pirates of the money world using such methods as these to corrupt the press, to intimidate workmen, to the end that these pirates may be given power to contract the money volume at will, thus raising or lowering prices, interest, wages, as best suits their selfish and lawless plans?

This is the method, we repeat, that defeated the honest will of the people in 1896; that enthroned plutocracy and replaced competition with plutocratic monopoly. But the people have learned a lesson since 1896. They see today the consequences of making "money the master, all things else the servant." In consequence of that lesson the entire country is in the throes of a moral awakening. It is hardly probable that bribery and bulldozing can again drive the American republic into betraying itself into the hands of its most dangerous enemies.—Omaha World-Herald.

LOCATING THE PULITZER TREASURE

The Omaha World-Herald prints this editorial:

"The New York World has inadvertently answered Mr. Bryan's challenge to admit publicly the financial interests of its owner in the stocks and bonds of American railroads. It makes the admission when it bitterly attacks the plank of the Nebraska platform relating to watered railroad stocks and to railroad earnings. The plank the World deems so utterly

bad that it ought to be 'creosoted' is as follows:

"Reduce transportation rates until they reach a point where they will yield only a reasonable return on the present value of the roads, such reasonable return being defined as a return sufficient to keep the stock of the roads at par, when such roads are honestly capitalized."

"The World brands this as 'wicked and wonderful economics' that would 'confiscate profits' and 'penalize' economical and efficient management. It makes a crime, shrieks the World, of competent railroad management!"

"Yet it is plain that the World can oppose this plank only on one or the other of these grounds:

"That railroads, which are public service corporations chartered as such by the people, should be permitted to charge rates that will yield more than a reasonable return on the investment.

"That they should be permitted to charge rates that will yield a reasonable return on stocks of the roads at par, when such roads are dishonestly capitalized.

"Either position amounts to the same thing and is unjust, untenable, preposterous.

"The plea that railroads should be permitted to earn more than a fair and reasonable return on an actual investment is a plea that condemns itself and the man who makes it.

"The plea that they should be permitted to water their stocks, to dishonestly capitalize their investment to the extent, sometimes, of \$10 of water to \$1 of actual value, and be permitted to charge rates that will return a profit on this dishonest, fictitious capital, as well as on the money actually invested, is also a plea that needs only to be stated to be rejected.

"When the World pleads for watered railroad stocks, and for more than a reasonable return on actual railroad investments, it gives its case away as completely as it would if it publicly listed, in response to Mr. Bryan's challenge, all the railroad stocks and bonds that are owned by Mr. Pulitzer and members of his family."—Omaha World-Herald.

LECTURING

Speaking of the criticism which some unfriendly papers have aimed at Mr. Bryan because of his lecturing, the Record-Herald of Chicago has the following to say: "There have been some sneers at the democratic orator because he makes his money on the platform instead of in the law courts, but it is not possible to find any justification for them. It is as proper for him as it is for a preacher or an author to deliver lectures for a price. There could be no cleaner way of earning a living, and none more independent in certain respects. The possible prizes, too, are alluring, and it is not strange that many politicians have joined the ranks of the lecturers in recent years. With all that has been said of the downward trend of the stage and the craze of the public for trivial dramatic performances, this increase of lectures and lecture courses is very interesting. If their popularity were ever an evidence of a serious-minded public it must be now, for most of the addresses are serious in purpose and convey lessons and point a moral. It would appear also that, notwithstanding all that has been said concerning the supplanting of the orators by the papers and magazines, there is still great eagerness for the spoken word. Certainly the crowds can not be fully explained by the mere desire to look at a notoriety."

IN NEW YORK

The Express this morning in an editorial referring to the election of delegates to the democratic state convention said:

"Following the illustrious precedent of the state committeemen, these delegates probably will go to New York and vote, at the direction of Messrs. Connors and Murphy, for an unconstructed delegation from New York to the democratic national convention."

The Express is mistaken. The twenty-seven delegates from Erie county will vote solidly for Bryan from first to last.

There is more time for thought and deliberation at a state convention than there is at a state committee meeting.—Buffalo (New York) Times.

CONGRATULATIONS

The Oklahoma legislature should congratulate Secretary Taft upon the spirit of progress shown in Ohio by the submission of the initiative and referendum announcement.