

The Commoner.

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THE COMMONER'S NINTH YEAR

With this issue The Commoner enters upon its ninth year. In its initial number it was said: "The Commoner will be satisfied if, by fidelity to the common people, it proves its right to the name which has been chosen." Those who have habitually read The Commoner may judge whether, in a reasonable way, it has justified its rights to the chosen name. Its purpose in the beginning was, as its purpose now is, to stand for the public interests and to make the great political party, with which it affiliates, of practical service to the people to the end that a government, erected as our government was "in liberty's unclouded blaze," shall be in truth what the fathers intended it to be—government of the people, by the people, for the people.

Greeting its readers at the threshold of another year, The Commoner assures them that it faces the future with heart full of hope and courage.

Jeremiah gave to literature a beautiful and striking figure when, in charging the children of Israel with apostasy, he said: "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

One is reminded of this forcible simile today when a large number of our people seem inclined to turn back to the once discarded doctrine of empires. To compare self-government with an arbitrary form of government is like comparing a living fountain with a broken cistern.

When the people are recognized as the source of power the government is perpetual because the people endure forever. The government then responds to their desires and conforms to their character; it can be made as good as they deserve to have and they are satisfied with it because it is their own handiwork. If it has evils, those evils are endured because the people recognize that they themselves are to blame and that it is within their power to apply any needed remedy.

A government resting on force is, on the other hand, ever unstable because it excites hatred rather than affection, and is continually at war with human nature; it is in constant antagonism to that universal sentiment which is defined as the love of liberty.

All history sustained the self-evident truths which form the foundation of a government deriving its just powers from the consent of the governed. All history condemns a political structure which appeals only to fear and relies upon bayonets for its support.



"UPON WHAT MEAT DOTH THIS, OUR CAESAR, FEED?"

THE GUARANTY OF DEPOSITS

The democratic national platform contained a plank pledging the party to legislation which will protect depositors against all loss in the case of bank failure. A number of the states adopted similar platforms and the matter was quite generally discussed on the stump. In a number of the states democratic legislatures are now in session, and the democratic members should proceed to carry out this and other pledges of the platform. A platform utterance is a party matter during the campaign, but when a party platform has been endorsed at the polls, its platform becomes the mandate of the people, and no democrat can defend or excuse a failure to fulfill in letter and in spirit the pledges made in his platform.

During the campaign, the Oklahoma law was frequently referred to, and while the party was not committed to the language of the Oklahoma law, it is only fair that this law should be taken as a model and that its provisions should be followed as far as practicable. The Commoner gives its unqualified support to the proposition that the banks should be required to stand together and protect their depositors from loss, and suggests that the democratic legislators in the various states secure a copy of the Oklahoma law and then consider the following amendments:

First. The Oklahoma law provides for the immediate collection from the banks of an assessment of one per cent of the deposits. This is a larger assessment than is absolutely neces-

sary, and considering the fact that banks have on deposit an average of four times their capital, and sometimes as much as ten or fifteen times their capital, the one per cent may be regarded as an unnecessary hardship. One-half of one per cent is suggested, therefore, as a sufficient assessment with which to begin the raising of the guaranty fund.

The Oklahoma law contemplates the maintenance of the guaranty fund at one per cent. It may be found advisable to make this fund a little larger, but to have it accumulated gradually. For instance, let the first payment of one-half of one per cent stand as the assessment for the first year; after that a semi-annual assessment of one-tenth of one per cent, making a total assessment of one-fifth of one per cent annually, would not be a burden upon the banks and would in a few years raise the guaranty fund to one and one-half per cent of the deposits. Then the banking board should collect semi-annually such an assessment, not exceeding one-tenth of one per cent, except in case of emergency, as might be necessary to reimburse the fund if, during the preceding six months, it was reduced by the payment of depositors in failed banks. This tax would provide for ordinary occasions, and with proper regulation, it is not likely that the banks would ever be called upon to pay more than one-tenth of one per cent semi-annually, and probably not more than one-tenth or one-twentieth of one per cent per year. The banking board,