

# The Commoner.

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

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## Wanted---Men

The congressional campaign of 1910 will soon be upon us and we ought to begin NOW to plan for it. Whether we shall secure a democratic majority in the next congress depends largely upon the character of the democrats nominated and upon the platform on which they run.

There may be districts in which the democratic candidate will have so large a personal following that his constituents will trust him without a platform, but these districts are, fortunately, very few. As a rule, the man who objects to a platform is the very man who needs to be pledged to a platform. If a candidate is in sympathy with his people and shares their sentiments he will not hesitate to state his position frankly and fully. When a candidate refuses to take the people into his confidence on a question at issue it is usually because he is conscious of holding opinions adverse to the interests of those whose votes he asks.

The first thing, therefore, is to find a democratic candidate in each congressional district who believes in platforms and who is willing to let the voters know where he stands.

The next thing is to find a democratic candidate whose platform is acceptable to the voters of this party, and a platform to be acceptable must represent the interests of the voters. There is scarcely a district in the United States where the INTERESTS of a MAJORITY of the voters are on the side of PROTECTION. The trouble is that the protected industries are active and noisy. The democratic candidate should have the courage to protect the SILENT MAJORITY against the demands of the NOISY MINORITY.

Take the wool question for illustration. There is probably not a district in the United States where the owners of sheep constitute one-tenth of the voting population, but that less than one-tenth often has more influence on the congress than the more than nine-tenths. Why? Because the sheep owners are organized and active while the rest of the people are often indifferent.

In Texas, for instance, about eleven hundred men own all the sheep in the state (1,500,000) and fifty men own about half the total number. Counting the clip at 6½ pounds to the sheep the annual wool crop would amount to about 10,000,000 pounds and be worth about \$2,000,000. If the sheep owners get the benefit of the 10 per cent duty on wool then the eleven hundred sheep owners in Texas receive about \$200,000 from the tariff on wool and, of this, fifty men receive about \$400,000 or \$8,000 apiece. Fifty men can afford to make a good deal of noise for \$8,000 per year each; they can afford to subsidize newspapers and to subsidize campaign funds.

But the 4,500,000 people in Texas who pay

at least 40 per cent (probably 50 or 60) more on woolen goods than they would with free wool, pay, each a little, and, therefore, do not take as active an interest in the subject. But a democratic candidate for congress ought to take the side of the many in spite of the threats of the greedy few.

The Commoner uses Texas as an illustration because it has the figures in regard to that state. In Arizona about 300 men own the 1,250,000 sheep in the territory. The Commoner will be glad to have its readers send in the statistics from other states—they can probably be obtained at the state capital.

The same is true of the tariff on lumber, iron ore, coal, etc. Protection is the fight of a few for privileges at the expense of the many; tariff reform is the fight of the many to keep the hands of the few out of their pockets.

The Commoner has presented a sample platform and it asks democratic candidates for congress to accept, reject or amend it to suit themselves, and it asks the democratic voters to see to it that democratic candidates are selected who really reflect the sentiment of the people of their district. Let the fight begin now and be continued in the open until we have a democratic congress made up of men who will put the interests of the masses above the clamor of those who seek favors.

Wanted—Men who dare to stand for the Jeffersonian doctrine of equal rights to all and special privileges to none.—From The Commoner of October 29, 1909.

### WHAT OF THE TAILINGS?

Have you ever visited a mining camp? If so, you have doubtless been interested in the various processes through which the ore goes. It is first washed and some of the worthless material is thus discarded; then it goes through the concentrator and some more worthless material is thrown out; then it is crushed and another separation is made. At last it goes through the smelter and the refined product comes forth. But what of the tailings, the worthless stuff that remains after the ore is extracted? At first it is dumped upon any convenient spot as waste, but after awhile it begins to pollute the water and to destroy the crops in the valleys below. Then those who are suffering injury rise up and demand that the mining companies take care of the tailings, and these companies finally construct expensive reservoirs for the impounding of the tailings.

Those who feel indifferent to the evils of intemperance ought to visit a mining district; they may find an illustration of what is going on daily in society. The liquor interests exhaust ingenuity in devising processes for the extracting of both money and manhood from the rich human ore that is passing through their mills and they throw the tailings out upon society. The mining companies find it impossible to extract ALL the ore; they stop extracting when the cost exceeds the value of the ore. So the saloons are not able to extract ALL the good from those who pass through their doors; they stop when the cost exceeds the income.

But society, more considerate and actuated by a higher motive, proceeds to care for and, if possible, reform those who have been brought to the verge of ruin by drink. Has society no interest in the liquor question?

### WHAT IS A DEMAGOGUE?

Whenever a corporation editor or a trust representative can no longer ignore an argument in favor of remedial legislation he denounces it as the utterance of a demagogue. The use of the word "demagogue" in such a connection has come to be an infallible sign that the one who uses it is consciously or unconsciously a sympathizer with the abuse that needs correction. Privilege and favoritism can not be defended hence the resort to epithet. According to the dictionary used by the beneficiaries of privilege he only is a statesman whose ear is tuned to catch the slightest pulsations of a pocket book, while he is a demagogue who dares to listen to the heartbeat of humanity.

## Indefensible

The Arizona Republican, assuming that there is to be a consolidation of the copper companies, attempts a defense. Here is a sample: "In the course of adjusting the production to the demand there will be an increase in prices and a curtailment of labor. The latter condition would have to come in any event. It takes just so much labor to produce a certain amount of copper, and there would not, in any case, be more produced, for any considerable period of time than might be needed."

Here are three propositions that deserve attention. First, prices will be raised. That will be to the advantage of the combination—in fact the main purpose of the combination—and every user of copper will suffer. This is effect number one. How complacently this injustice is contemplated. Second, there will be a curtailment of labor. This throws upon the laboring men an oppressive burden while the employees gain a considerable advantage. This is the second effect, and this injustice, too, seems to be contemplated with unconcern by the editor of the Republican.

But, third, we have an argument presented in defense of the second proposition, namely, that the demand for copper is just so much and no more. This ignores the economic law that a rise in price tends to lessen the demand while a fall in price tends to increase the demand. Under competition the price will fall until a demand is created and thus labor is kept employed, but under combination the laboring men are discharged and prices are raised. The increase will still further lessen the demand and more laborers will be discharged.

If copper is produced at a cost of ten and sells for thirteen the combination can make as much profit on half the output if it raises the price to sixteen cents, but what about the idle laborers and the consumers of copper?

The Republican has inadvertently exposed the whole plan of the trust, but instead of denouncing the scheme it defends it.

### THE PRICE

It's another cent on the price of milk  
And a cent on a pound of tea,  
And a cent on this and a cent on that,  
To be paid by you and by me—  
To be paid by you and by me, my man,  
But it oughtn't to make us rage  
Or to make us mad if they'd only add  
A cent as well to our wage.

It's only a cent on a pound of meat,  
On a loaf from the flour of the wheat,  
And a cent on the clothes we've got to wear  
And a cent on all that we eat.  
Oh, they haven't forgot a thing, my man,  
From your shoes and your coat to your hat,  
Excepting the pay you earn each day—  
They've added no cent to that!

But every cent they add, my man,  
Is a cent they've got to pay  
When a halt we call to their greed and all,  
And that time will come some day.  
And the cent that you pay today, my man,  
Today when you're sore oppressed,  
Will be yours when due—and it's up to you  
To collect it with interest!

—New York World.

### SENATOR MCLAURIN

Democracy lost a sturdy defender and the American people a faithful servant when A. J. McLaurin, United States senator from Mississippi, passed away. Senator McLaurin served in the senate for nine years and in that body, as in the office of governor of Mississippi and in various other public positions, he discharged his duty well. It would be well if the young men and women of Mississippi could study carefully the history and the high character of Senator McLaurin. In these they would find ample inspiration for high endeavor.

## CONTENTS

WANTED—MEN  
INDEFENSIBLE

WHAT IS A DEMAGOGUE?

SENATOR MCLAURIN

EDUCATIONAL SERIES—FREE RAW MATERIAL—BY HON. T. W. SIMS

MR. BRYAN IN SOUTH AMERICA

CURRENT TOPICS

HISTORY MAKING EVENTS

MINISTER WU'S CHRISTMAS SERMON

HOME DEPARTMENT

NEWS OF THE WEEK

WASHINGTON NEWS