

Where the Rank and File Stand

R. B. Minor, San Antonio, Texas—Have just been reading The Commoner of 7th and especially the leading article, "Eternal Vigilance Necessary." You are right without doubt. But with nearly every great daily newspaper busily engaged in deceiving the people, how can they understand the real situation? These newspapers can deceive "the very elect." Here's a suggestion: Establish in a prominent place in The Commoner a "Newspaper Directory," in which give the leading daily newspapers and opposite each give the names of the owners of the majority of the stock of these newspaper corporations according to the best information obtainable. Then the reading public, when the New York and Chicago dailies begin to advocate a particular candidate for president, could refer to their "directory," and learn from what source this advocacy comes. Wouldn't that "put them wise?"

Beatrice, W. Va., July 14.—Editor New York World. Dear Sir: I just received copy of your paper and did not find any slap in it at William J. Bryan, the "dead politician." We just heard that he was still alive. Better try him again. One of the six million supporters of Bryan.—A. E. Lamp.

Walter Hoey, Wallace, W. Va.—I for one certainly appreciate the stand W. J. Bryan took on the wool tariff question. It certainly is gratifying to follow a man who thinks more of party principle than of party success. My eyes are being opened as they never were before. I hope Mr. Bryan will stand firm and not compromise on anything that is right. He is wielding a mighty influence for good in the world which will live after he is gone. He will be remembered by all good people of future generations when many of the politicians who now are betraying our party will be forgotten. I think we ought to encourage a man who will do as he is doing and this is why I am writing this letter.

James Scully, Iona, Mich.—Enclosed find check for \$1.00 for The Commoner. I like the tone of your paper and believe that this is the time for every true democrat to put forth his greatest efforts to return the control of our government to the people. While it may seem somewhat early to form an opinion as to the most available candidate for president, at the present writing Governor Wilson appears to loom up as a very formidable candidate. There is one thing certain, the democrats must nominate a progressive, or their work will be in vain. I wish you greater success in the splendid work done by your paper and convey my highest regards for the noble work of the great commoner.

Otto Peltz, Kansas City, Kan.—"The suggestion comes from Nebraska that Bryan's head be put on the new postage stamps. It wouldn't do. When Bryan is licked and stuck in a corner he never sticks."—The above editorial can be found in the Kansas City Journal of July 25, 1911. Being printed in a "corporation paper" it is meant as ridicule. This is what the interests have been striving for since 1896. Since then they have "licked" Bryan three times, consigned him to a political graveyard a number of times more, and never, in the last fifteen years, have they missed an opportunity to ridicule, and vilify the greatest champion of the common people the world ever knew. This editorial shows that they have failed and they know it. After fifteen years of battle Bryan has never been "stuck in a corner" hard enough to stick. Our greatest struggle is now before us. In addition to the court protected corporations, we must battle with the traitors in our own ranks. Those boosting Harmon, and crying for harmony. If all democrats were as honest and fearless as Bryan, we would have had harmony, all through these years of struggle.

John R. Moore, Palestine, Texas—I heartily approve the stand you are taking in The Commoner. Especially am I pleased with your position as to the tariff. By the way, I should like to see published in The Commoner, in parallel columns, the tariff plank as reported by the platform committee and the substitute adopted by the democratic national convention of 1892. According to my recollection the plank as reported by the committee was a straddle while the substitute adopted by the convention was clearly against protection. I notice that much

has been said about the tariff plank of the Texas convention of 1896, and some parties seek to bolster that plank with the name of John H. Reagan. I happened to be one of three delegates from my county in attendance upon that convention, the other two being Judge Reagan and Hon. T. M. Campbell, since governor of Texas. Judge Reagan may have been responsible for that plank but I give you a little circumstance that happened at that convention that may show he was not the whole thing. The money issue was the all absorbing question and yet the plank as first reported by the committee declared in favor of the redemption of the paper money in gold or silver coin at the option of the government. Hogg, from the floor of the convention, called attention to the error and it is true that Judge Reagan undertook to defend the platform and it was some time before he caught on to the mistake. I write about these two convention matters merely from memory and leave the publication of this letter entirely to you. I feel sure that the papers published at the time of the two conventions will sustain my statement. Next to you, I should like to see Wilson and Folk or Folk and Wilson head our ticket in the next campaign.

Martin Rosenbaum, Melrose, Mass.—The decision of the supreme court in the Standard Oil case, is the rankest that ever was delivered by that court or any other court. The next democratic platform should have a plank, stating there is no such thing as "reasonable restraint of trade," in fact, it ought to embody entirely the dissenting opinion of Justice Harlan, which was the grandest utterance of the very best and greatest man that ever sat upon the supreme bench.

Graham C. Hunter, Nutby, N. J.—In the last few months we have seen two cases in particular in which the supreme court of the United States has repealed legislation by process of distinction; one the Danbury Hatter's case, the other the Standard Oil case, both under the Sherman law. However necessary the action in the first of these cases may have been, yet evidently the supreme court does not believe that the law-making body represents the general opinion of the common people. Perhaps the reform needed then, is to strengthen the legislative body, and make it the undoubted representative of the people. In the general idea it is not that now. Most people distrust not only congress, but also the state legislatures; and, some have abandoned all hope ever of seeing a legislature constantly responsible to the people. May one of your readers who admires The Commoner and its editor uphold the suggestion made long ago that even with the referendum one of the great needs is that the people may hold their legislators up to the requirements of the party platform? They need to be able to say to their legislature: "Here is the bill fulfilling the party's pledge, and sanctioned by your party; vote for it." In four or five states of the union they are doing this. One is Colorado, where Governor Shafroth has again and again shown himself to be the head of his party as well as governor by holding before the legislators what the people desire and what they do not. Another is New Hampshire, and another is California, and a very eminent example is this state of New Jersey, where by cool persuasion and without use of the patronage, Governor Wilson set before the legislators the program the people desired, showed up each man to his constituents, and gained by the simple method of getting in the light, a splendid list of progressive laws. Your reader believes firmly in the separation of the judicial and legislative departments of the government. We are, however, getting back to the first principles of independent government when the chief executive of nation or state also acts as head of the party whose platform has been chosen by the people as their desire. A governor or a president who recognizes this need can never be a tyrant, for he is always under control of the legislative body, and he will be the means by which the great needs of the time will be met.

P. H. Long, Stella, Mo.—I feel that if you can smooth these few remarks out and make them readable they will speak for many of the backwood democrats who are beginning to think for themselves and are going to support principle rather than men. I wish to congratulate you on your stand on the recent wool fight in the house

of congress. The principle you fought for was democratic as well as right, and was on the side of the masses. Underwood has shown us that democracy can be forsaken by those whom the people have entrusted to write it into the law under the dome of our capitol. It seems to me that the real fight was whether or not Bryan could be humiliated by his friends. Can we right a wrong by doing half wrong and half right? They claim they left 20 per cent duty on wool because of the sins of the republicans which put a 44 per cent duty on wool. Under the light of reason then, if I should be convicted in court of stealing and argue to the court that I would quit half my stealing, ought they not to turn me loose free, and say, go, ye blessed of our land, for of such rest the hopes of our government. Light of reason! Every time you steal \$44 you are entitled to keep for your trouble \$20 and for being generous-hearted, praised by the newspapers of protection. If I were in the habit of getting drunk every week and whipping my wife and spending the money that should go to buy warm clothing for my children I should only be allowed to commit this very immoral wrong and injustice to my family every two weeks instead of every week. Mr. Underwood, under the light of reason, if you were going to quit sinning would you undertake it by degrees—in broken doses, or would you change suddenly around and quit the one and cling to the other. When the poor sinful woman was brought before Christ for Him to condemn, He told her to go and sin no more. He didn't say quit sinning by degrees, but quit now. I suggest that if Mr. Underwood is left in our party that the party plainly tell him to do so no more. And poor old Champ. We had banked so much on him. Where is he? We can't find him. Whose side was he on? Has he denied like Peter? If so, let him repent like Peter and we will think over giving him the keys of our next choice to unlock the white house, which will be in 1912. I would rather give them to Mr. Bryan. I have never known him to bow the knee to Balaam or worship the golden calf. We always know before election what he stands for and after the election we know that he still stands for the same thing. We feel sure he has been taken up into an exceedingly high mountain and instead of bowing to the prince of the world (money) he said get behind me for it is written that man shall not live by bread (money) alone but by obeying his conscience. I have heard many remarks concerning Mr. Bryan becoming a candidate again for president in 1912 and the only objection among the democrats is his being defeated three times. Let us run someone who can unite the forces. Tommyrot, we can never unite the forces no more than you can unite light with darkness. We must never choose our captain from our enemies, no matter if they do say they are our friends. Let us follow the more sure way of being right, that is, stay with those that always stay with us. Don't imagine you can trample on the feelings of your conscience and go against sound sense and be freed from sins by merely washing your hands. It will take a deeper washing than the hands to cleanse us of our mistakes.

WATCH IT GROW

Mr. Bryan has given instructions that every new subscriber shall receive The Commoner for a period of two years (which will carry it beyond the presidential election of 1912) for the sum of one dollar. Every Commoner reader is asked to secure at least one new subscriber. Many will be able to secure more than one. Everyone, however, may render some aid in this work.

The following named readers have sent in five or more subscribers:

Geo. W. Garrett, Ark.; T. F. Miller, Cal.; M. J. King, Mo.; W. E. Fowler, O.; W. A. Hoover, Ind.; R. J. Vaughn, O.; F. M. Wilson, Kan.; L. W. Anderson, Mo.; A. Holdale, Miss.; J. W. Hughes, N. Y.; N. B. Hoyes, N. Y.; J. A. Okey, O.; H. H. Peters, Ill.; Elizabeth Compton, Mo.; C. W. Hollis, Mo.; W. H. Grow, Minn.; J. J. Dean, Ia.; J. L. Caldwell, Tex.; Michael McCarthy, Cal.; Geo. M. Haight, N. Y.; W. T. Elmore, Mont.; O. L. Hanna, Ill.; M. A. Hoyt, Ia.; Geo. A. Grabe, Cal.; J. A. Henne, O.; S. S. Patch, Ia.; A. G. Sherbarger, Pa.; A. B. Smith, Ala.; Bernard Borgmann, Neb.; L. H. Hayes, Va.; M. W. Harris, Ind.; Arthur H. Ebel, Ind.; J. H. Hall, Neb.; Wm. Misbaum, O.; J. R. Armor, Pa.; S. J. Hockman, Ind.; S. E. Wheeler, N. Y.; M. McLaughlin, D. C.; A. L. Pearse, Ill.; Jno. Shufelt, N. Y.; J. R. Richey, Tex.; R. B. Arnold, Ia.; Jno. T. Hupp, Ill.; A. P. Barnum, Pa.; W. A. Deen, Ill.; M. A. Hoyt, Ia.; W. T.