

The Commoner.

ISSUED WEEKLY

Entered at the Postoffice at Lincoln, Nebraska, as second-class matter.

WILLIAM J. BRYAN Editor and Proprietor  
 CHARLES W. BRYAN Publisher  
 RICHARD L. METCALFE Associate Editor  
 Editorial Rooms and Business Office, 324-330 South 12th Street

One Year .....\$1.00  
 Six Months ..... .50  
 Three Months ..... .25  
 Single Copy ..... .05  
 Sample Copies Free.  
 Foreign Post, 52c Extra.  
 In Clubs of Five or more, per year.. .75

SUBSCRIPTIONS can be sent direct to The Commoner. They can also be sent through newspapers which have advertised a clubbing rate, or through local agents, where sub-agents have been appointed. All remittances should be sent by post-office money order, express order, or by bank draft on New York or Chicago. Do not send individual checks, stamps or money.

RENEWALS—The date on your wrapper shows the time to which your subscription is paid. Thus January 31, '13 means that payment has been received to and including the last issue of January, 1913. Two weeks are required after money has been received before the date on wrapper can be changed.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS—Subscribers requesting a change of address must give old as well as new address.

ADVERTISING—Rates will be furnished upon application.

Address all communications to  
 THE COMMONER, Lincoln, Neb.

were expended in trying to see that our laws were enforced there would be a more wholesome respect for our courts and officials, and crime would diminish. A murderer is usually a coward, and while he has no fear of imprisonment, would quake at the thought of the rope. It will be remembered that the would-be murderer of Colonel Roosevelt followed him through several states to shoot him in a state where he knew there was no capital punishment. And again, no man will deny that a man has the right to kill in self-defense, and in the execution of a murderer the public is acting in self-defense.

I am not in possession of the late records of the Arizona penitentiary, but I do know that only a few years ago the actual time of a life-timer's sentence in the territory was then 8 years. I think it may be less lately, in the "pen" where one of the life timers from Maricopa said recently, "We are having a devil of a good time."

Some governors in liberating criminals, claim the promise of Christ, which is, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." It may be quite natural for them to crave the mercy of God but they are very unmerciful to the public when they liberate criminals, and we are afraid by being unmerciful to the many put themselves in the box with the unmerciful instead of the merciful.

How many of the lower class of our citizens in Arizona have any fear of the law, as it is administered today? They care not for the hope of reward of good living, and they have no fear of punishment. They might land in the pen, but there they would only be taught that the courts were very unjust—that they did not deserve what they were getting, and that the conditions of society made it incumbent on them to steal or kill. As a man who has had some observation of things in general, I think I can discern a cloud gathering on the horizon that will break forth in meting out justice to law-breakers, in a way that promises effectiveness and dispatch.

The man that says that capital punishment does not deter the murderer must look again into the history of the past. Several states in the union have tried to do away with it, and have been forced by the increase of murders to go back to it. Italy, Spain and France have all had a trial at it, and all have been forced to adopt it again. In one state crime increased 250 per cent after abolishing capital punishment. There are plenty of such records available, and many more passages of scripture to show that "He that sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," if only the truth is wanted.

It is well for us to look forward to the time when the world shall rise to the sublime height of the fulfillment of Christ's teaching of loving our neighbor as ourselves, to play and work earnestly for that day's dawning; but it is also

quite as important that we do not forget that we are yet on earth and have to deal with things as they are today; not let the idea of Arizona's progressiveness force us to progress backward by turning backward the hands on the dial of time. If our public officials should all use their best efforts toward the enforcement of the laws they were elected to execute, instead of the making of new laws and forcing their own ideas upon the people, overriding the laws they swore to enforce, we would have a right to expect better results. We may call criminals unfortunate, we all know that environment plays an important part in shaping our lives but the truth still holds good that we are the architects of our own lives.

In my opinion, the first work of the next legislature should be to do away with parole and pardoning power; let no man have the power to thwart the power of judge and jury, and through them the people, as did the governor of Arkansas a few days ago liberate nearly four hundred criminals upon the people in one day. As soon as such law was passed the veto power of the governor should be curtailed or entirely done away with; it is too much one man power. Now that the slogan has gone forth, let the people rule, why give one man power to keep the people from ruling? This one man power is not in the keeping with the spirit of the age. You say what would be done in case new evidence is found? Let the case be re-tried before a court and twelve men.

This power is a relic of the past, and has always been abused, the people always getting the worst of it. If the power is to go back to the people, let every citizen, regardless of color or sex, understand that it is their solemn duty to see that the laws are executed, and not set aside by the officials who have sworn to execute them.

Let me illustrate. Suppose the people by a referendum vote enact a law and at the same time elect a man known to be opposed to that law, to enforce it. In other words, suppose a community votes dry, then elect a saloon keeper to enforce the law. The rule of the people is right. It is the right principle of democratic government. The veto power of president or governor is the one man power. The pardoning power is greater than the voice of the people as expressed by all the courts. Let us do away with both and let the people rule.

Mr. Bryan has done the country an invaluable service in his continual advocacy of the rule of the people. His next duty is to instruct them in law enforcements.

The wisest utterance of President Wilson was when he said that if every man in the United States would read one chapter of the Bible each day and, strive to follow its teachings most of the trouble of the nation would disappear, or words to that effect.

I close with a quotation from the Editorial Review, from the pen of the bishop of Albany, Bishop Doane, and let me add, that of all the states in this union, the abolition of capital punishment in Arizona would be most dangerous. Divided from a people who are making murder and crime a profession only by an imaginary line, it would be an invitation to Mexican murderers to come to Arizona, where their breed of unfortunates will be welcomed.

Bishop Doane said:  
 Genesis IX, 5-6 plainly sanctions the death penalty for murder. "And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it and at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man, who sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood, be shed, for in the image of God made He man."

It is a somewhat curious confirmation of the position that in the four states where capital punishment has been abolished, murders have steadily increased. In Michigan, Iowa, Colorado and Rhode Island, the legislatures restored the death penalty after a short time, owing to the marked increase of crimes of violence. In Michigan this increase was as high as twenty-five hundred per cent, and in Iowa between 1872 and 1876 it was very rapid. In New York state it was restored, and a voluminous report to the legislature set forth the conditions that called to a reverting to the death penalty. Abroad, the abolition has been followed by increased crime. In Switzerland, Austria and other European countries the temporary trial led to the readoption of the earlier practice.

It is, in my opinion, childish to confute the fallacy that the commandments, "Thou shalt not kill" and "Thou shalt do no murder" contradict the old Mosaic law. I really think it

is time we contented ourselves with the fact that, whatever theories we may have, where there is a single plain revelation of God's law, we may be absolutely certain to find no contradictions of it in any other portion of the Bible, and that only harm can come from our disregard of it. If a person attempts to take away my life, I have, doubtless, a right to protect myself, and if I can not secure myself but by taking the life of my assailant, I have the right to take it. If men had the right to form society for mutual benefit and security, they had the right to punish other persons who would overthrow it.

There is nothing more plainly taught in the Bible than capital punishment. Moses said that "The murderer shall die." Christ did not contradict that law in a single word or act, but taught that the "wages of sin is death." It is certain that Solomon had three murderers executed during the building of the temple, and it seems to me that, with these facts before us, the man who would do away with capital punishment must consider himself a greater man than Moses, a wiser man than Solomon, and a better man than Christ. He must have read history with his best eye closed. "Thou shalt not kill" certainly does not mean that a murderer shall not be executed.

A POPULAR MOVE

Everywhere President Wilson's "six-power loan order" is accepted by the rank and file of the American people. The Springfield (Mass.) Republican prints the following editorial:

"One can at least admire Huntington Wilson's stubborn fidelity to the 'six-power loan' after it had been repudiated not only by the government but virtually by the New York bankers and outspokenly by the New York Tribune. The Tribune is an opposition paper, if there is one today in the country. Criticism of the president's position regarding the loan might have been expected from so consistent a supporter of the Taft administration. Yet the Tribune said recently:

"The American people will uphold President Wilson in refusing to continue the government's support of further participation by American bankers. Public opinion has greatly changed since the plan of American participation was adopted. The partnership has become irksome because the political character of the enterprise became apparent when powers that would have to borrow the money which they proposed to lend insisted upon being admitted among the international group of lenders. Then, too, the resentment of China against the terms which the international syndicate demanded has tended to make the people of this country reluctant to go on with the enterprise, especially as the efforts of China to establish popular government have deepened the sympathy felt here for her."

"The popularity of the president's attitude on the loan question could receive no stronger testimonial than that. It is, apparently, the late assistant secretary of state against the American people. If, now, the president finds it possible to grant formal recognition to the Chinese republic, the country will greet the act with approval practically unanimous."

FRIENDS

Ralph Waldo Emerson: I awoke this morning with devout thanksgiving for my friends, the old and the new. Shall I not call God the Beautiful, who daily showeth himself to me in his gifts? I chide society, I embrace solitude, and yet I am not so ungrateful as not to see the wise, the lovely and the noble-minded, as from time to time they pass my gate. Who hears me, who understands me becomes mine—a possession for all time. Nor is nature so poor but she gives me this joy several times, and thus we weave social threads of our own, a new web of relations; and as many thoughts in succession substantiate themselves, we shall, by and by, stand in a new world of our own creation, and no longer strangers and pilgrims on a traditional globe. My friends have come to me unsought. The great God gave them to me.

CHINA'S GRATITUDE

The first disastrous effect of President Wilson's action in withdrawing official support of the six-power loan to China is that China has thanked the president for the stand taken by the administration.

The defenders of "dollar diplomacy" are entitled to whatever satisfaction they can find in China's conduct.—New York World.