

In 1904 and made it stand erect again. He is the safest man to do it now. If the leaders would have heeded his advice it would not now be a wrecked party. He is the man who gave us Woodrow Wilson in 1912 and it was Bryan who reelected him in 1916. He campaigned for Wilson in twenty odd states and nineteen of them gave Wilson their votes, including California. Had he lost California he would have been defeated. The convention of 1904 and 1920 failed to listen to Bryan and you know full well what happened. The Democratic candidate in 1904 made the poorest showing of any man ever nominated for president except Taft in 1912.

Emmet F. McGahee, West Virginia.—Your Commoner is doing a great work in getting the expressions on governmental problems direct from and to the people, who are the source and foundation of true democracies. What the progressive elements of our country seem to need greatly at this time is education to the reforms necessary to better government through publicity. And this could be greatly accelerated by the friends of The Commoner and its worthy achievements and ambitions to come to its aid with material as well as moral assistance, especially from those who are amply able. If its circulation could in some way be doubled in the next year the good would be unmeasurable.

There is one plank which I believe would add somewhat to the present progressive platform and its something like this: That instead of spending billions of dollars of the people's hard-earned tax money for armies and navies which only brutalize and destroy the fair youths of every land, the government should appropriate a sufficient sum and see that all of our American youths have an opportunity for at least an high school education, and, furthermore, appropriate and set aside a sufficient amount to thoroughly Christianize, Americanize and educate the multitude of foreigners who are so numerous among us.

Edward Johnson, Washington.—Since 1896 I have been one of your devoted followers, and have three times done my utmost to elect you President. Ever since The Commoner was started, I have taken and read the paper attentively—more attentively than any other publication, for I have often been struck with the want of grasp and lack of constructive purpose of most of those who have at various times opposed or criticised Mr. Bryan. To my mind you have been the most far-seeing statesman and the greatest moral force in the United States for a generation, and I am proud to be one of the millions of Americans who regard you with love and admiration.

You ask for opinions as to what should now be done in a recent issue of The Commoner. Mine follow briefly:

1. We should have an immediate and drastic reduction of taxation. So far as the Federal government is concerned, I would stop building battleships and reduce the army and navy expenditures to the lowest possible point. Then I would write a note to the Japanese government telling them what I had done. And to England, John Sherman once said, referring to the resumption of specie payments. "The way to resume is to resume." So I say, "The way to disarm is to disarm." Further, we ought to keep all of the excess profits and income surtaxes possible, trying to stop at the point beyond which the high taxes will defeat their own end, so that less taxes will be collected. There should not be a sales tax, except possibly on a few articles. We want to promote foreign trade, and our tariffs should keep this end steadily in view, instead of being guided solely by what certain domestic industries want.

2. We should have a League of Nations, with real powers of decision and action. America ought to lead in this. I sincerely trust that when the President takes up his subject he will bring about an agreement which will have substance instead of shadows, and will make the world more safe for democracy by advancing the cause of democracy. I hope, Mr. Bryan, that you may be in a position to contribute toward this end, and that the reactionaries will not have their way with the new executive. To my mind, the creation of a real and effective league or association of nations transcends all other questions in importance.

As a Democrat, I would like to see the Democratic party quit being a heterogeneous collection of individuals, unite on a practical program founded on correct principles, and attack the Republicans. I see little chance for the party in the future unless this can be done.

Rather than just drift, or being near enough like the Republican party so that it will always beat us, it would be better to have a new party founded on first principles and hold to it firmly, while at the same time being keenly alive to modern conditions. It will be better for the United States and for the world if the intelligent and patriotic people of the country can come together on common ground which their minds and hearts can approve, and force a new political alignment between the true Democratic thinking people of the country and those who are merely opportunists or have no real beliefs at all.

Marcus Day, Idaho.—As one of the rank and file among Democrats, I take quite an interest in the fight you are making for reorganization. If we are to have the same set of leaders again projected upon us, it is my opinion that I speak majority opinion among Democratic multitudes in saying: "We will have none of it."

The issues in which we are interested do not receive attention. The principal—the 42-centimeter question—is monopoly in credit, transportation, steel, lumber and, in the very near future, motors.

From the present possibilities, it looks very much as if the country will suffer the most amazing exactions from monopolies in its history. It is logical to expect reaction of an extreme nature from the general letter of marque which the masses in their gullible imbecility have written to a representation in congress whom they knew not as to motives.

Are not the rank and file of the Democrats going to have a chance to make their choice as to programs and candidates. If not, we are going to go in a body to some new and anti-privilege association to drive special privilege out of the government. We are tired of the cowardly compromises of all the essentials of every piece of legislation and the enforcement of legislation.

I feel positively certain that the Democrats, as a mass majority, are for the things I suggest. I do not know whether the leaders believe like this or not. We do not care. It is not the right idea to be forever looking up to leaders as a fetish.

What we need is a referendum of the entire electorate upon a program that attacks monopolies and for the purpose of showing the Democratic leaders that they must comply with popular demands. It will take scads of money but that is a mere matter of details if all the progressive leaders will stand behind the idea. It will not be necessary to take in any of those who do not want to travel in the Democratic road. They belong within the Republican organization and the sooner all reactionaries are in the same organization that much sooner will the people shake off the rule of reaction.

J. D. Jefferson, Virginia.—I think all progressive Democrats, Prohibitionists and temperance people should rally around the plans you have suggested for the Democratic party for 1924. Without your leadership it will be useless for the Democratic party to nominate a candidate in 1924. I find that you are always on the side of the people. I voted for you three times and I hope that I may have an opportunity to vote for you again in 1924. I do not see how the Democratic party can refuse to adopt your suggestions for 1924, as it is the only safe Democracy for the people. We are enjoying many reforms that you have worked hard for, and I hope that you may live a long time yet to suggest issues for the American people. The people of the United States owe you the presidency, and I hope you will be elected in 1924. If you should be elected I am sure your administration would be a great success.

Leroy Miller, Iowa.—The Democrats should wage an unrelenting war on universal military training and advocate with the same tenacity disarmament, economy by lopping off useless offices, and a reduction of salaries. They should advocate a law with teeth in it to combat profiteering. Where reconstruction fails to bring down the price of monopoly-controlled products to an approximate level of farm products, let Uncle Sam in the spirit of "by the eternal" take a whack at the financial pirates.

Edwin L. Moore, Missouri.—Whenever Bryan suggests something for the party, his ancient enemies abuse him and say he is butting in and interfering again. Well, why shouldn't he? He certainly has as much right to do so as John Smith, or McAdoo, or any other Democrat. In

"the arduous greatness of things done," he is head and shoulders above any of them. Under his leadership or by his influence the party has won more legislative victories, and the nation has accomplished more reforms, than may be credited to any other American leader. From the income tax to woman suffrage, from the direct election of U. S. senators to the Federal Reserve banking system, from arbitration treaties to prohibition, the passing years are trophied by his tremendous educational campaigns. And he is still in the reforming business, and that makes the reactionaries mad. His present legislative platform looks to the future for the good of mankind. Who else is capable of suggesting or carrying forward such a constructive program? Where shall we look for a leader? To Cox? McAdoo? Underwood? Palmer? Gerard? Good men, but none of them is sufficiently attractive to the people to lead us out of the wilderness into which we were lured last year, after our lack of courage at Kadesh-barnea, out by the Golden Gate. Like Caleb and Joshua of old, Bryan and Hobson stood forth and said, Come on! But no, the others feared, and compromised, and retreated. We must get away from those mistakes. Never again should the Democratic party bow the knee to Wall street or to beer, "that thrift may follow fawning." We must take a positive stand for the right, and under aggressive leadership success will come again.

Aubrey Moorman, Leitchfield, Ky.—Your humble friend, the writer, ever since he wore the little "ragged 'roundabout'" which James Whitcomb Riley has made immortal, and for more than twenty years, has loved you; although he is only one of thousands who would express this sentiment, and you have weightier matters in mind, may he beg you to read this love-letter. He is proud of the fact that both of his grandfathers held you in high esteem, and that his father now holds for you a very warm place in his affections.

You have held fast to the same high purpose in all these years, and with your great feeling the need of your pricelessness, you giving to posterity for their priceless heritage the example par-excellent of unselfish devotion to the "Cause of the Great Common People." As much as we love the music of your voice and the power of eloquent speech which your Heavenly Father has given you, and which has won for you the rightful name of "Peerless One," we know you are pre-eminently great as a constructive statesman and a sound thinker in matters pertaining to government. The San Francisco convention is the proof of the pudding, that unless the Democratic party is willing to follow your able leadership it will utterly fail.

We endorse your program, outlined in the last issue of The Commoner, to the last letter, and hereby pledge our full support.

May the love and esteem of countless honest hearts be your ample reward in this world; in the Afterwhiles your reward will be great beyond our cherished hopes.

T. J. Bevins, Kentucky.—I am heartily in sympathy with W. J. Bryan in his efforts to reorganize the Democratic party one time more, as it appears to be in very bad shape at this time. I am willing to take him as a leader as he has never been for anything but honest politics. I have read his paper from its first issue to the present, and have voted for him every time he ran for president. I am ready to vote for him the fourth time if I am alive in 1924. I hope Mr. Bryan will get the party rid of Wall street and the liquor interests. That means to organize the party from the bottom to the top, so he will be in shape to lead to victory in 1924.

C. J. Morehead, Kentucky.—I always have been and always will be with the interests of the people and nation, but I feel that I cannot do the good that I ought to. I am in favor of the league that provides peace for all time to come. All necessary monopolies should be taken over by government, national, state and municipal. I am heartily in favor of that, also I am in favor of reducing taxes—I mean the profits tax law. I feel like the Democratic party can be reorganized.

Dan R. Sheen, Illinois.—I have read your proposed National Legislative Program, as published in the March issue of The Commoner, and it meets my full approval. This doesn't mean that I am willing to take a leading part in this new Democratic propaganda, but simply to be a disciple, rather than an apostle. I have been an adherent of the Prohibition party, but feel that