

The Commoner

ISSUED MONTHLY

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

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One Year.....\$1.00 Three Months... .25  
Six Months..... .50 Single Copy..... .10  
In Clubs of Five or more per year ... .75 Foreign Post. 25c Extra

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THE COMMONER, LINCOLN, NEB.

the ministry and not attempt to debase the religion which they profess.

And so in the matter of education; Christians do not dispute the right of any teacher to be agnostic or atheistic; but Christians do deny the right of agnostics and atheists to use the public school as a forum for the teaching of their doctrines. The Bible has in many places been excluded from the schools on the ground that religion should not be taught by those paid by public taxation. If this doctrine is sound, what right have the enemies of religion to teach IRRELIGION in the public schools? If the Bible cannot be taught, why should Christian taxpayers permit the teaching of guesses that make the Bible a lie? A teacher might just as well write over the door of his room "Leave Christianity behind you, all ye who enter here," as to ask his students to accept an hypothesis directly and irreconcilably antagonistic to the Bible.

Our opponents are not fair. When we find fault with the teaching of DARWIN'S UNSUPPORTED HYPOTHESIS they talk about Copernicus and Galileo and ask whether we shall exclude science and return to the dark ages? Their evasion is a confession of weakness. We do not ask for the exclusion of any scientific truth; but we do protest against an atheist teacher being allowed to blow his guesses in the face of the student. The Christians who want to teach religion in their schools furnish the money for denominational institutions. If atheists want to teach atheism why do they not build their own schools and employ their own teachers? If a man really believes that he has brute blood in him he can teach that to his children at home or he can send them to atheistic schools where his children will not be in danger of losing their brute philosophy, but why should he be allowed to deal with other people's children as if they were little monkeys?

We stamp upon our coins "IN GOD WE TRUST;" we administer to witnesses an oath in which God's name appears; our President takes his oath of office upon the Bible. Is it fanatical to suggest that public taxes should not be employed for the purpose of undermining faith in the nation's God? When we defend the Mosiac account of man's creation and contend that man has no brute blood in him but was made in God's image by separate act and placed on earth to carry out a divine decree we are defending the God of the Jews as well as the God of the Gentiles; the God of the Catholics as well as the God of the Protestants. We believe that faith in a Supreme Being is essential to civilization as well as to religion and that abandonment of God means ruin to the world and chaos to society.

Let these believers in "the tree men" come down out of the trees and meet the issue. Let them defend the teaching of agnosticism or atheism if they dare. If they deny that the natural tendency of Darwinism is to lead many to a denial of God, let them frankly point out the portions of the Bible which they regard as consistent with Darwinism, or evolution applied to man. They weaken faith in God, discourage prayer, raise doubt as to a future life, reduce Christ to the stature of a man and make the Bible a "scrap of paper." As religion is the only basis of morals, it is time for Christians to protect religion from its most insidious enemy.

WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN.

Municipal Coal Yard

Another month has been added to the activities of the municipal coal yard at Lincoln, Nebraska. When the agitation started for this municipal coal yard a little more than a year ago, good Illinois bituminous soft lump coal was being sold by all the retail coal dealers in Lincoln at about \$14.50 per ton delivered to consumer's bin. There were about twenty retail coal dealers at the time, and a spread of 25 cents per ton would about cover the prices made on this coal.

Charles W. Bryan at that time was not connected with the city in an official capacity but commenced the agitation as a private citizen for a municipal coal yard for the purpose of restoring competition and protecting the public from the unconscionable prices that were being charged Lincoln people for coal. After showing conclusively by figures the cost of coal at the mine, the freight rate, etc., that Lincoln people, as elsewhere throughout the county, were being charged about 100 per cent more for coal delivered in their bins than it was costing coal dealers f. o. b. the cars in their city, and being unable to induce the city commissioners then in office to establish a municipal coal yard, Mr. Bryan found it necessary to stand as a candidate himself at the spring election a year ago in order to bring before the voters the direct issue of the establishment of a municipal coal yard, a municipal ice plant and a municipal public market in order to secure for the people the essential necessities of life at reasonable prices.

Mr. Bryan was elected as city commissioner by a substantial majority, and although opposed by the business organizations of the city, especially the coal dealers, succeeded, after thoroughly arousing public opinion, in getting an ordinance through the city council authorizing the establishment of a municipal coal yard and placing the management and responsibility for same in the hands of Commissioner Bryan.

The effect of the passage of the ordinance on the retail coal dealers of this city was very marked. They reduced the price of their Illinois lump coal from \$14.50 to \$12.50 per ton although there was no reduction at the time in the price of the coal at the mine to justify the reduction of the retail dealers. At the time the retail coal dealers reduced the price of the best southern Illinois coal, known as Franklin County coal, from \$14.50 to \$12.50 per ton, they were paying more at the mine for this coal than they were during the time they were selling it at \$14.50 per ton.

When the municipal coal yard opened for business Oct. 1 and commenced selling the Franklin, Illinois district, screened lump coal at \$10.50 per ton delivered, the retail coal dealers made a price of \$10.50 per ton on what they called Illinois lump coal, and publicly claimed that it was the same grade of coal the municipal yard was selling at \$10.50 a ton. However, the Illinois coal that the retail coal dealers of Lincoln were selling at \$10.50 was what is known as Central Illinois district coal or the Belleville or St. Louis standard coal. The public, however, was not deceived, and the sales at the municipal coal yard of the Franklin County district coal at \$10.50 increased, and the high grade quality of the municipal coal did its own advertising until today the municipal yard is probably selling more than one-half of all the coal sold in Lincoln for domestic purposes.

On Jan. 1 the municipal coal yard, finding that it was making a larger profit at \$10.50 per ton than was necessary, reduced the price of its coal from \$10.50 to \$9.90 per ton delivered, and the private coal dealers then reduced their cheap grade of Illinois coal to \$9.75 per ton and continued to claim that it was the same grade of coal that the city was selling at the municipal yard.

The official monthly statement made by Mr. Bryan to the city commission of the activities of the municipal coal yard will give the reader some idea of the volume of business handled by the municipal coal yard. Although the municipal coal yard handles only one grade of coal, it has been of immense service to the people of Lincoln, not only in the way of the saving in price on the coal bought at the municipal yard, but on account of the reduction not only in the price of the soft coal handled by the private dealers but private dealers also found it necessary to reduce the price of their semi-anthracite coals and anthracite coals as well in order to retain any share of the retail coal business in the city of Lincoln.

There has been a saving to the coal consumers of Lincoln of upwards of \$4.00 a ton on each ton of coal bought from the municipal coal yard,

amounting to upwards of \$30,000, and there has been a saving of upwards of \$2.00 a ton to the coal consumers of Lincoln on all coal of all kinds purchased from the private coal dealers during the winter. A conservative estimate of saving to Lincoln people during the past season on their coal bills on account of the establishment of the municipal coal yard would be \$150,000.

Commissioner Bryan's report of the municipal coal yard for the month of February and a summary of the activities of the yard for the five months ending March 1, follow:

March 1, 1922.

To the City Council:

The municipal-coal yard will close on or as near Mar. 31 as possible. Although the threatened coal strike will probably commence April 1, the consumption of coal for domestic purposes for the spring and summer will be so nearly over by that time that it is hardly likely that the municipal coal yard will be needed again until it opens for business about Oct. 1.

The price of coal at the mines is cheaper now than it has been for some time. The municipal coal yard is offered good Arkansas Anthracite lump coal at \$5.00 per ton f. o. b. the mines and at \$3.25 per ton for mine run f. o. b. the mines. The freight rate is about \$4.50 per ton. There was a reduction in Franklin County district coal of 25 cents a ton at the mines the latter part of February.

The amount of production of coal has been considerably in excess of the consumption of coal for the past year, and the indications are that there will be a still further reduction in the price of coal before next fall. The sales of the municipal coal yard during the month of February were larger than for the number of days during any other month since the municipal coal yard was established last October.

The municipal coal yard has been handling only one grade of coal, which is the Franklin County district lump coal. A detailed report of the activities of the municipal coal yard since it was established last October, and also a detailed report for the month of February follow:

Total number of orders of coal sold to customers of the municipal coal yard from Oct. 1 to Mar. 1	5813
Number of tons sold	7408
Number of tons on hand Mar. 1	106
Total amount of receipts from sale of coal	\$74,638.92
Total amount paid out for coal	\$59,317.90
Total cash paid to coal haulers for delivering coal	\$ 7,029.79
Total amount overhead	\$ 2,093.01

REPORT FOR MONTH OF FEBRUARY

Number of tons on hand Feb. 1	147
Tonnage bought in February	1763
Number of tons sold in February	1779
Amount of cash received for coal during month of February	\$17,489.40
Cash on hand Feb. 1, including revolving fund of \$15,000	\$22,498.89
Paid for coal during month	\$16,912.84
Paid to coal haulers for delivery of coal	\$ 1,834.54
Overhead for month of February	\$ 364.56
Cash on hand Feb. 28, including revolving fund appropriation	\$20,976.35
Cash on hand Feb. 28, exclusive of revolving fund appropriation	\$ 5,976.35
Balance in improvement fund	\$ 202.69

Respectfully submitted,

CHAS. W. BRYAN.

Commissioner & Supt. of Municipal Coal Yard.

The validity of the woman suffrage amendment to the federal constitution, challenged by Maryland and several other states that refused ratification, has been finally and forever settled. The federal supreme court holds that whenever a state follows the procedure for ratification laid down in the federal constitution it has done all that is necessary, and that because a state which refuses ratification has a provision limiting the suffrage to males only is no reason why, when the necessary number of states ratify, the women therein are not enfranchised. It is a distinct triumph for the principle of majority rule.

The Nebraska farm bureau announces that it has begun the formation of an agricultural bloc for the purpose of making sure that its legislative program will be adopted at the next session of the state body. When it becomes necessary for the farmers in a state as thoroughly devoted to and dependent upon agriculture as Nebraska, it may awaken the interest of a number of voters who think that there is nothing to the charge that special interests take a very active hand in choosing legislators.