

The Commoner

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THE COMMONER, LINCOLN, NEB.

Speaking of the efforts of the administration to prevent the price of coal being increased, have you noticed what has happened to gasoline prices since the Senate decided to investigate them?

The average law-abiding citizen finds it difficult to grow very indignant when he reads in the newspapers that some rich man's cellar has been robbed of many thousand dollar's worth of liquor.

High schools find it comparatively inexpensive to hold commencements during the year in which the biennial election falls. It is a poor school indeed that cannot get a senatorial, congressional or gubernatorial candidate to deliver the annual address free of all expenses.

Sometimes events occur that seem to have direct connection. The report that Henry Ford for president clubs were being organized in many parts of the country is followed by the announcement from Washington that the house committee has changed its mind and has decided that Ford's Muscle Shoals proposition is the best one after all. This is likely, however, to alienate the affections of the fertilizer trust from the Republican party.

On the eve of his retirement from congress, Uncle Joe Cannon says that he is not in sympathy with those people who are backing movements to restrict and restrain personal privileges in various directions. While in congress Cannon lived up to this notion of the duties of the representative of a people, in spite of the fact that the chief function of government always has been to do just that very thing. Uncle Joe may point with whatever of pride he possesses to the trusts as monuments of his adherence to the policy he enunciates.

The metropolitan newspapers say that the primary system of making nominations and the popular election of senators has greatly lowered the level intellectually among members of congress. What they really mean is that it has considerably lessened the number of members who take their orders from political machines and the big interests that finance them. The quality of a congress is determined by the character of the legislation it enacts, and since the primary system has been in effect the people secured a great mass of progressive legislation that was never before possible.

Western farmers, millers, grain dealers and town merchants have found a common cause and a common interest in the movement started to increase the wheat yields in the winter wheat belt. They propose to secure intelligent selection of seed and develop better harvesting and storing methods, the object being to increase the net return from the high-priced land of this section. The merchants, millers and grain dealers will find it more profitable in the end to assist in movements that aid agricultural prosperity than to pursue the old methods of trying to keep the farmer poor by taking too heavy a toll of his produce.

Fairview a Hospital

The readers of The Commoner may be interested in the conversion of Fairview, Mr. and Mrs. Bryan's Nebraska home, into a hospital. The following address, delivered by Mr. Bryan on May twenty-seventh, to the Methodist Committee and its guests at a luncheon, sets forth the facts:

"Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee and Guests: I appreciate the opportunity which you have given me to formally present to the Methodist Hospital Association a deed to our home at Fairview. The place is sacred to us and will ever recall delightful memories.

"The ground upon which the house stands was selected and purchased in 1893. During the vacation between the adjournment of the first Congress in which I served and the special session of the second Congress, convened in August, I spent the time at home in the study of the money question which was then growing in importance. My exercise was horse-back riding and I found myself unconsciously turning toward the top of the little knoll upon which the house now stands. It was then in an unfenced field and I was attracted to it by the fact that it gave me a splendid view of the agricultural lands in that section.

"After my visits to the spot had become habitual, Mrs. Bryan and I decided to buy it for the site of the country home which we contemplated building. I went to the county records to find the owner and soon became the happy possessor of the title to the five acres. From time to time I added to it as adjacent owners wanted to sell until I owned the forty acres upon which the house stands. Afterwards the farm was enlarged until it covered nearly a quarter of a section.

"About five years after we purchased the first five acres we built a little cottage upon the knoll and set out trees about the place where the farm home was to stand. After that our visits to the 'farm' became more frequent and I often went out there to write, Mrs. Bryan bringing out a lunch for us both at meal time. In the summer of 1901 we arranged for the building of our country home and broke ground for the same on the first day of October, that being the seventeenth anniversary of our marriage and the fourteenth anniversary of our removal to Lincoln. The foundation was laid and the brick barn erected that fall.

"On March 19, 1902, we celebrated another anniversary (the forty-second anniversary of my birth) by moving into the barn where we lived during that summer, supervising the construction of the house. We observed two anniversaries again on the first of October following by moving into the house which was then near enough to completion to occupy.

"I will digress a moment here to explain that a house of brick and stone had been in my mind from youth, I having inherited it, as it were, from my father. When he was an orphan boy, working on a farm for money with which to pursue his studies in college, he chanced to be employed by a farmer who lived in a substantial brick house. While there my father conceived an ambition to live in a similar home and this ambition was realized in 1866 when he built a brick house about a mile from Salem, Illinois. This was my home from the age of six to the age of twenty-three, when I removed from Salem to Jacksonville, in the same state.

"I had now realized my ambition, but I must confess that I was somewhat embarrassed by the unexpected cost of the house. When Mrs. Bryan and I planned the home we hoped to build it for about ten thousand dollars but, as is not unusual with home builders, we made change after change, enlarging one room, adding another, improving finishings, etc., until the estimates ran considerably above that. I remember that about this time a friend told me of overhearing a Republican, riding on a street car that runs near the place, say that I was building a 'twenty thousand dollar home.' It made me indignant that a man, merely because he was politically opposed to me, would so exaggerate the cost of my house. It seemed offensive partizanship to say the least. But as time went on I began to wish that I could find a Republican who would guarantee that the cost would not run OVER twenty thousand. It went higher than that; in fact, it went so high that, when it reached twenty-five thousand, I refused to examine the totals. I just paid the checks and put the receipts away. I do not know today what the place cost, but I am sure that it was a much more costly home than I ever ex-

pected to live in. So much for the location and the building.

"We had quite a time selecting a name. A multitude of suggestions were considered and turned down. Finally we hit upon 'Fairview' as being expressive and yet modest. I know of no spot from which one can obtain a more beautiful agricultural view. A mountain top gives a wider expanse, but from Fairview we could see for several miles and were near enough to enjoy to the full the colors that come with the seasons. I have stood on the front porch and counted twenty-five wheat fields and fifty corn fields, besides groves and pasture lands.

"I need hardly add that we expected to make it our permanent home. Our children were raised there and it is hallowed by the memories of family life. When Mrs. Bryan found that the winters were too severe for her we selected a winter home, first in Texas and then in Miami, Florida, expecting to occupy Fairview during the summer months.

"When, later, Mrs. Bryan became the victim of arthritis, which, while causing no organic break-down, brought suffering and impairment of locomotion, it became evident that we could have only ONE home and Miami was chosen as the place where she could be most comfortable. When this change was decided upon we were brought face to face with a serious problem: What should we do with Fairview? The children were married and settled in other parts of the country. We could not resign ourselves to the thought of turning our home over to private owners, with the chances and changes that are involved in it; so we decided to devote it to some public purpose.

"Just about this time the Methodists were planning for a hospital. While I am a Presbyterian, I am almost as intimately connected with the Methodists as with my own denomination. At the time of my birth my mother was a Methodist, although she afterward joined the Baptist church with my father. My wife was raised a Methodist but afterward joined the Presbyterian church with me. While at Fairview we attended the little Methodist church at Normal in order to be more closely associated with our neighbors. Our only son, who united with the church while we lived at Fairview, is a member of the Methodist church. For many years I have had delightful association with the leadership of the church in Nebraska and elsewhere and appreciate the very large part that this denomination had had in securing two amendments in which I have been deeply interested, namely, prohibition and woman suffrage. I may add, too, that my law partner's connection with the Methodist church has had no little weight to the attractiveness of the proposition. Talbot is one of the dearest men I have ever known. We became acquainted when at law school together forty years ago. My location in Nebraska, with all that has followed, is due to the fact that he lived here. For more than four decades our lives have been entwined and the remaining years are enlivened by the hope that we may frequently have opportunity to commune with each other and to review the days that are past.

"A Christian school is the only institution that equalled a hospital in attractiveness, and even a school does not appeal to our sympathies so strongly as do the sick. Affliction is the key that opens our hearts and makes an irresistible call upon our affections. The knowledge that suffering will be relieved here long after we are dead will yield more satisfaction than could be derived from dividends from a similar amount otherwise invested.

"To this great branch of the Christian church we gladly entrust this building which has meant so much to us. We are blessed with children and grandchildren and have no reason to doubt that we shall find a home with them, but if the time ever comes when either of us needs the care that will be provided here it will be pleasant to know that such a haven of refuge is open to us. At least, we shall have the pleasure of knowing that the building will shelter many who will find in it Christian benevolence applied.

"Our prayers and blessings accompany the gift and we thank the members of your Hospital Association for the opportunity you have given us to give it."

It developed at a New York legislative investigation of a proposed merger of independent steel plants that Kuhn, Loeb & Co., Wall street brokers, were to get 15 per cent for floating the stock and a present of half a million dollars worth of stock. People who demand to know what is this Wall street that public defenders criticize are respectfully invited to step up and take a look. Here it is in concrete form.