

## The Commoner.

### Free Speech in Universities.

The report made by the educators who investigated the action of Mrs. Stanford in demanding the resignation of Prof. Ross fully sustains the criticism which has been directed against her and the university authorities. After reading the verdict of these distinguished and disinterested instructors, no one will doubt that the views entertained by Prof. Ross on the silver question, Chinese immigration and municipal ownership led to his dismissal. It was a plain and unvarnished attempt to deny free speech to an able, honest and courageous teacher, and it will require many years to remove the stain from Stanford University. This incident, together with similar incidents in recent years, will tend to lessen the influence of those private institutions of learning which are being supported by large individual donations unless such institutions are left entirely free to teach economic truths.

Below will be found an extract from the report giving the findings of the committee:

While it is, of course, impossible for us definitely to determine what facts or reports of supposed facts may have with Mrs. Stanford, the evidence in possession of the committee seems to justify the following conclusions:

(1.) There is no evidence to show that Professor Ross gave occasion for dismissal by any defect in moral character. On the contrary, President Jordan states in his letter of February 7 to the committee: "No ground exists for any interpretation of his dismissal reflecting on his private character."

(2.) There is no evidence to show that Professor Ross gave occasion for his dismissal by incompetence. On the contrary, President Jordan stated in a letter of May, 1900, that he was "a careful thinker and a patient investigator," "a constant source of strength" to the university, and "one of the best teachers, always just, moderate, and fair."

(3.) There is no evidence to show that Professor Ross gave occasion for his dismissal by any unfaithfulness in the discharge of his duties. On the contrary, President Jordan stated in a letter of May, 1900, that "he has been most loyal, accepting extra work and all kinds of embarrassments without a word of complaint," and that he was "a wise, learned, and noble man, one of the most loyal and devoted of all the band" at the university.

(4.) There is no evidence to show that in his published statements of November 14 Professor Ross violated any confidence reposed in him. On the contrary, in a letter of December 24, President Jordan states: "I wish, after conversation with Dr. Ross, to withdraw anything I may have said implying that he had knowingly used confidential material, or in any other way violated personal proprieties in making his statement."

(5.) Concerning the point that Professor Ross gave occasion for his dismissal by remarks derogatory to Senator Stanford, your committee finds, in a statement by Mr. C. F. Lummis, in the Land of Sunshine, dated Christmas, 1900, the following passage:

The precise words Professor Ross may have used I do not know, but I do know that he has stated in his classes in Stanford many things which his students understood to be reflections on Senator Stanford; and I know also that Mrs. Stanford firmly believes that he did slur her husband's memory.

In the Independent of February 7, 1901, Mr. Lummis repeats his charge, quoting Mrs. Stanford's reasons for his dismissal. \* \* \* "He has called my husband a thief."

The committee also finds that President Jordan, in a letter of November 16, 1900, states:

Mr. Keesling informs me that he and others of the alumni have heard you in your classes condemn the means by which Mr. Stanford became rich, in such a way as to make it clearly a per-

sonal reference, and that some time last year Mrs. Stanford was told this by a prominent alumnus, Mr. Crothers, if I understood correctly.

In a letter of the next day, however, President Jordan retracts this by saying: "Mr. Crothers tells me that he has never mentioned the matter in question to Mrs. Stanford. I was not sure that I understood my informant to say so."

Professor Ross, moreover, at the time unqualifiedly denied all such charges, and insisted that statements to this effect are "a thorough-paced falsehood and a disingenuous attempt to befog the real issue." In another place he says: "The charge from any quarter that I have ever made any remarks derogatory the character of Senator Stanford is false; absolutely without foundation." In a subsequent letter he states: "I have never referred in a derogatory way to Senator Stanford, nor have I reflected upon the manner in which he accumulated his fortune. Both my sincere respect for the Senator and my sense of the proprieties of my position forbade anything of the kind."

Moreover, that this charge could not have a determining cause in President Jordan's acceptance of Professor Ross' resignation, is shown by the fact that, in a letter of November 16, two days after his dismissal, President Jordan says, in reference to these charges: "I never heard anything of the sort before."

(6) There is no evidence to show that in the opinion of the president of the university, Professor Ross, in his utterances on the silver question, on coolie immigration, or on municipal ownership, overstepped the limits of professional propriety. On the contrary, President Jordan stated in May, 1900, that his remarks on coolie immigration and on municipal ownership were in accord with the drift of public sentiment on those subjects, and that even on the silver question "he never stepped outside of the recognized rights of a professor."

(7.) There is evidence to show,

(a) That Mrs. Stanford's objections to Professor Ross were due, in part at all events, to his former attitude on the silver question, and to his utterances on coolie immigration and on municipal ownership;

(b) That while the dissatisfaction of Mrs. Stanford, due to his former attitude on the silver question, antedated his utterance on coolie immigration and municipal ownership, her dissatisfaction was greatly increased by these utterances.

As to (a), This is shown by the fact that President Jordan at first attempted to deter Mrs. Stanford from taking any action for such reasons, stating, in a letter of May, 1900: "I feel sure that if his critics would come forth and make their complaints to me in manly fashion, I could convince any of them that they have no real ground for complaint." President Jordan, moreover, intimated that to dismiss him for such reasons would be improper in the extreme, for "no graver charge can be made against a university than that it denies its professors freedom of speech."

As to (b), This is shown by the fact that not until immediately after the delivery of the coolie immigration speech did Mrs. Stanford force Professor Ross' resignation, as well as by the fact that in a letter of June, 1900, President Jordan stated: "The matter of immigration she (Mrs. Stanford) takes most seriously."

In the same letter, while Mrs. Stanford's objection is declared to be due to the fact that the reputation of the university for serious conservatism is impaired by the hasty acceptance of social and political fads, it is added, that these "local criticisms" which weighed with Mrs. Stanford "unfortunately are based on chance matters and obiter dicta, not at all upon our serious work."

We have not deemed it wise to publish in full the letters upon which we have based our conclusions, but we stand ready to publish them if such a course is necessary to establish the truth in this matter.

We are aware that owing to the failure of President Jordan to give definite replies to all our ques-

tions, there may be important facts with which we are unacquainted. On the other hand, we cannot but feel that a refusal to furnish specific information in a case of such importance—in which it is charged that the freedom

of speech is at stake—is itself a fact of significance, which, to say the least, is much to be regretted.

All of which is respectfully submitted.  
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HENRY W. FARNAM, Professor of Political Economy, Yale University.  
HENRY B. GARDNER, Professor of Political Economy, Brown University.

The undersigned have examined the evidence submitted by the above committee and believe that it justifies the conclusions which they have drawn:  
HORACE WHITE, Editor of the Evening Post, New York.

JOHN B. CLARK, Columbia University.  
HENRY C. ADAMS, University of Michigan.  
FRANK W. TAUSSIG, Harvard University.  
RICHARD T. ELY, University of Wisconsin.  
SIMON N. PATTEN, University of Pennsylvania.  
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FRANKLIN H. GIDDINGS, Columbia University.  
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CHARLES H. HULL, Cornell University.  
DAVIS R. DEWEY, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.  
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### She Moved.

The clever characterization of Horace Greeley in a recent popular novel has called forth many anecdotes and reminiscences of that famous editor of the benignant soul and countenance, and familiar chin whiskers. A neighbor of the Greeley family in New York contributes one quaint little scrap to the collection.

Mrs. Greeley had, at one time, become much dissatisfied with the house in which they were living. There really were many objections to it, and one day she poured them all forth in a long and rather excited complaint to Mr. Greeley. He heard her out with undisturbed tranquility, and when she had quite finished said simply:

"Well, ma, move."

She took him at his word. As he evidently did not care to be consulted, consulted he was not. For several days there was more or less confusion in the house, as the packing went on, and room after room was dismantled, but the living rooms were left till the last, and Mr. Greeley did not even notice it.

At length, one evening he came home—and found no home to come to. The house was dark and empty. He stood for a few moments on the door-step in amiable bewilderment; then, deciding what to do, he began calling upon the neighbors in turn, inquiring of each, with an appealing smile and unruffled sweetness:

"Do you know where ma is? She's moved."

Some one did know at last, and "pa," the one thing left behind, moved also, and rejoined his household in their new and more comfortable quarters.—Youths Companion.

As to "Social Advantages."

O, ye gods and little fishes!  
Should we yield to Sampson's wishes,  
And bear down upon the man behind the gun;  
Should we tell him he could never,  
Though his work be e'er so clever,  
Reach the grade that men like Farragut have won;  
Should we tell him lack of polish  
Would his merit marks abolish,  
And prevent him from attaining high degree,  
We at once would quench the fire  
Of each patriot's desire  
To serve his country well upon the sea.  
But we still retain that organ  
We call sense, and Gunner Morgan,  
Even though not versed in social etiquette,  
Will be given, by the nation,  
Chance to reach a higher station,  
And by faithful service win an epaulet.

—H. Wm. Smith, in Nebraska State Democrat.