

"COMMERCIALISM AND MR. BRYAN."

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the will I have accumulated between twenty-five and thirty thousand dollars more, but so large a part of my accumulations is tied up in a home, in household goods and in lands that yield but a small return, that I am still almost entirely dependent upon my lectures and my paper for my income.

The Commoner is accomplishing the purpose for which it was established. Through it I reach a large constituency directly, and through about 3,500 exchanges a still larger constituency indirectly. I have drawn from The Commoner about \$5,000 a year, which is not a third as much as I would have received had I accepted offers that came from other newspapers. Aside from property, real and personal, which I call my own, and which I estimate at from fifty to fifty-five thousand dollars, I have a sum in The Commoner reserve fund sufficient to guarantee to the subscribers that they will receive the paper for the period covered by their subscription. As the subscriptions are paid in advance I have felt bound to keep this fund large enough to protect the subscribers.

Besides giving so large a share of my time to public work which brings no remuneration I have since 1896 contributed in money more than \$32,000 to political, educational, charitable and religious work.

This statement is made not because it is pleasant to discuss my personal affairs, but because I desire that the readers of The Commoner, and others who may be interested, shall be able to judge the Bennett case according to the facts. Mr. Bennett earned his money honestly, was thoroughly in sympathy with the work that I am trying to do, and he had confidence that the bequest which he endeavored to make would be used for the advancement of principles which he believed to be important. Whether his faith in me was well-founded; whether his friendship was deserved; whether I was worthy of the confidence that he expressed—these must be proved by my conduct in the past and by my conduct in the future. I am satisfied that I have acted as he would have had me act in regard to

this transaction. Where I have deviated from the path marked out by him it has been against myself rather than in favor of myself. He intended that I should decide whether I would use the money or distribute it. I have left that question to be decided by his widow. Whether at any point in this entire transaction my conduct has been open to criticism from a moral standpoint is a question which I willingly submit to political enemies as well as to political friends, for a moral question cannot be decided by political bias or upon political grounds. The only decision thus far rendered upon the moral points in the case was rendered by a republican judge, and that decision was emphatically in my favor. When the court rejected the sealed letter and refused the introduction of further testimony, that branch of the case was appealed to the supreme court, and I immediately asked for the trial of the case in which undue influence was charged. The attorney for the widow and heirs asked for a postponement of the case on the ground that that case might be affected by the supreme court decision on the legal point, and I consented to the postponement only on condition that the records should affirmatively show that I was ready and anxious to proceed with the trial. That case involves the \$30,000 to be distributed for educational purposes as well as the \$50,000.

There is still another question to be considered—a question raised by another suit—namely, whether as a matter of equity the sealed letter, taken in connection with the will, should be construed as establishing a trust. This question remains to be tried.

And now, if the readers of The Commoner will forgive this reference to personal matters, I shall spare them any further mention of the Bennett will case until there is a decision to report.

"COMMERCIALISM AND MR. BRYAN."

In the current issue of The Commoner William Jennings Bryan publishes a diatribe against the trusts, which are, he argues, undermining the very government itself to satisfy their greed. "The public conscience," he says, "has been stupefied by commercialism until the grossest offenses against liberty and good government do not awaken the protest that ought to be made against even trivial departures from the path of rectitude." It is not defending the trusts to point out that Mr. Bryan's words come with poor grace from his mouth, when he puts the emphasis on avarice and greed and "trivial departures from the path of rectitude." He is even now engaged in an enterprise which other people are tempted to characterize in language akin to his own.

Here are the facts as they appear from court proceedings. Philo S. Bennett, a friend of Mr. Bryan's and an enthusiast for free silver, decided to leave Mr. Bryan \$50,000 by will to promote the work for the cause. Mr. Bryan, although a beneficiary, drew up the will himself. Had he phrased the bequest in direct terms all might have been smooth sailing. Instead he chose the indirect form of a secret letter, not formally part of the will, which specified what use was to be made of the money, and from the text of this letter it now appears the money was to go to Mr. Bryan's heirs in the event of his own death. Mr. Bryan eagerly pushes his claim in the courts, and now that the letter has been held to be no legal part of the will he is carrying an appeal to the higher courts.

Mr. Bryan's right to seek for the payment of the bequest will not be questioned by anyone—not even by those who most clearly feel the indel-

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leacy of his drawing such a will himself, and of his drawing it in the evasive way he chose. But neither can, in most instances, the "legal rights" of the trust builders, whose greed Mr. Bryan so loudly denounces, be called in question.

The public conscience "stupefied by commercialism" may need awakening, but Mr. Bryan would do well to strip off his own garment of commercialism before he poses again as a waker.—Chicago Record-Herald.

The Crazy Map.

New England is the center of insanity, according to a map made by Dr. William White, superintendent of the government hospital for the insane. In those called crazy by their friends sane. The next craziest states are New York and Pennsylvania, in the eastern part of the country. Their population has one crazy person in every 424. Maryland stands a little higher in the scale of saneness. Her ratio is one of 610, which also applies to Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee and a few others. The states in the western half of the Mississippi basin are still higher

in the scale, their ratio being one in every 925, while the Rocky mountain states are the sanest of all, their population having only one insane person in every 1,263. But over the other side of the Rockies, including all of the Pacific coast states, there is a decided falling off in the sane average. Those states have almost as many insane persons as New England.

In the extreme south the highest average of saneness prevails. Very few persons go crazy in the south.

Dr. White, in his odd map, includes only those who have been pronounced deranged by insanity experts. All those called crazy by their friends and acquaintances are omitted. What the insanity figures would be if the unprofessional opinions were used as a basis is a question difficult to answer.—Buffalo Times.

Rank Folly of Thibetans.

The Thibetans are queer fellows not to understand that they are being benevolently assimilated by those British machine guns. They actually defend their country against an invader! That is what comes from not being in touch with the world.—Springfield Republican.