

A Great Fortune in Sunbeams

Several years ago Charles Lounsberry, a Chicago lawyer who at one time ranked high in his profession, died an insane patient in the Cook county asylum at Dunning. Although this man died absolutely destitute and penniless, he left a "will." This will was duly sent to the probate court, but there being nothing to probate the document was merely placed on file. Referring to this will at the time the Chicago Record-Herald said that it was "framed with such perfection of form and detail that no flaw could be found in its legal phraseology or matters, yet 'devising' only those beauties and blessings which the Great Father long ago devised to all human creatures."

The Record-Herald printed the document as it stood "for the sake of its intrinsic beauty and peculiar interest." For the same reason it is now reproduced in *The Commoner*:

"I, Charles Lounsberry, being of sound and disposing mind and memory, do hereby make and publish this, my last will and testament, in order, as justly as may be, to distribute my interest in the world among succeeding men.

"That part of my interest, which is known in law and recognized in the sheep bound volumes as my property, being inconsiderable and of none account, I make no disposition of in this, my will. My right to live, being but a life estate, is not at my disposal, but these things excepted, all else in the world I now proceed to devise and bequeath.

"Item: I give to good fathers and mothers in trust for their children, all good little words of praise and encouragement, and all quaint pet names and endearments, and I charge said parents to use them justly, but generously, as the needs of their children shall require.

"Item: I leave to children inclusively, but only for the term of their childhood, all and every, the flowers of the fields, and the blossoms of the woods, with the right to play among them freely according to the customs of children, warning them at the same time against thistles and thorns. And I devise to children the banks of the brooks and the golden sands beneath the waters thereof, and the odors of the willows that dip therein and the white clouds that float high over the giant trees.

"And I leave to children the long, long days to be merry in, in a thousand ways, and the night, and the moon, and the train of the milky

way to wonder at, but subject, nevertheless, to the rights hereinafter given to lovers.

"Item: I devise to boys jointly, all the useful, idle fields and commons, where ball may be played; all pleasant waters where one may swim; all snowclad hills where one may coast; and all streams and ponds where one may fish, or where, when grim winter comes, one may skate, to have and to hold these same for the period of their boyhood. And all meadows, with the clover blossoms and butterflies thereof; the woods with their appurtenances, the squirrels and the birds and echoes and strange noises, and all distant places which may be visited, together with the adventures there found. And I give to said boys each his own place at the fireside at night, with all the pictures that may be seen in the burning wood, to enjoy without let or hindrance, and without any incumbrance of care.

"Item: To lovers, I devise their imaginary world with whatever they may need, as the stars of the sky, the red roses by the wall, the bloom of the hawthorne, the sweet strains of music, and aught else they may desire to figure to each other the lastness and beauty of their love.

"Item: To young men, jointly, I devise and bequeath all boisterous, inspiring sports of rivalry, and I give to them the disdain of weakness and undaunted confidence in their own strength. Though they are rude, I leave to them the power to make lasting friendships, and of possessing companions, and to them exclusively, I give all merry songs and brave choruses to sing with lusty voices.

"Item: And to those who are no longer children, or youths, or lovers, I leave memory, and I bequeath to them the volumes of the poems of Burns and Shakespeare and of other poems, if there be others, to the end that they may live the old days over again, freely and fully without title or diminution.

"Item: To our loved ones with snowy crowns, I bequeath the happiness of old age, the love and gratitude of their children until they fall asleep."

Commenting upon this peculiar document the Record-Herald said: "The human mind is a peculiar instrument. The mind of a man justly adjudged insane by his fellows will turn out veritable masterpieces of poetry or literature now and again. The ways and means by which the unbalanced mental machinery accomplishes at once such real wonders and such wonderful mistakes constitutes one of the most perplexing mysteries known to the scientific student—a mystery second only in intensity, strangeness and interest, to the mystery of life itself."

A DEMOCRATIC MEASURE

The Omaha Bee, a republican paper, says: "The poor old democratic party, which always limps at the tail end of republican reforms, now claims to be entitled to the advancement of the railroad regulation bill, which was originated by republicans, indorsed by a republican president and passed by a republican house by almost unanimous vote. But the country will cheerfully concede the democrats whatever credit there is due for falling in and giving the measure active and earnest support."

Of course the important thing is the adoption of reforms essential to public welfare, but it is just as well to keep the record straight. It is refreshing to read in a republican paper that the democratic party "limps at the tail end of republican reforms" on the railway rate question. In 1896, in 1900 and in 1904 the democratic national platforms declared in favor of railway rate legislation. The republican platforms for those years were silent upon that question. The democratic nominee, in his letter of acceptance, laid particular emphasis on this proposed reform. The republican nominee was silent. In the house every democrat voted in favor of the measure and the only votes cast against it in the house were republican votes. In the senate the five senators who in committee voted against the measure were republicans, while of the eight senators voting to report the bill five were democrats. It is generally believed by friends of the measure that every democrat in the senate will vote for it. The vigorous fight now being made against the measure is made by republican senators.

Railway rate legislation is a democratic measure indorsed by democratic national platforms, advocated by democratic candidates and supported by democratic members of congress. When the president, who was elected as a republican, gave indorsement to that democratic meas-

ure democrats throughout the country gave to him cordial support.

Republican papers will avoid considerable embarrassment if, instead of denying to democrats the proud honor belonging to them, they accept the more than generous statement made by Senator Tillman when he referred to the railway rate bill as "a non-partisan measure."

So far as the people are concerned, it is a non-partisan measure, but it owes its origin to democrats and if it shall be saved from the Aldriches and the Forakers in the senate the work of salvation will have been accomplished by Tillman and his democratic associates.

JOHN R. WALSH

The Chicago Chronicle charges that other Chicago newspapers have conspired to ruin John R. Walsh and speaks of the acts of its contemporaries as "journalistic scoundrelism." The Chronicle need not be greatly disturbed by any alleged conspiracy on the part of the Chicago newspapers. Mr. John R. Walsh has been granted extraordinary privileges by men whose duty it was to proceed against him. He is closely allied with some very powerful influences, and if he can show clean hands with respect to his Chicago bank he will not be held to account on any imaginary charge.

It will occur to a great many people that Mr. Walsh has been treated pretty well. He would do well to devote his time now to the explanation of the serious accusations made against him.

NOW PROCEED

By its decisions in the paper trust and the tobacco trust cases the supreme court has placed in the hands of the executive department of government a powerful weapon. Officers of these trusts refused to answer questions with respect to their methods of organization. The court's

ruling is to the effect that while an officer of the corporation cannot be required to incriminate himself, he can be forced to give complete testimony respecting his corporation.

In the tobacco trust case Justice Brown delivered the opinion. He said that no one would contend that a witness could plead the fact that some other person than himself might be incriminated by his testimony, even though he were the agent of that person. He added: "If he cannot set up the privilege of a third person he cannot set up the privilege of a corporation." Justice Brown declared that the position of the trust officers were substantially "that an officer of a corporation which is charged with criminal violation of the statute may plead the criminality of such corporation as a refusal to produce its books," but he said: "To state this proposition is to answer it."

Justice McKenna delivered the opinion in the paper trust case, and it was to the effect that officers of corporations cannot plead that they do not have personal possession of the corporation books as a reason for failure to produce them. Under these decisions corporation officers must produce their books and give testimony concerning corporation affairs when required so to do by a court of competent jurisdiction.

Now proceed, Mr. Moody, against the trusts.

A GIFTED WOMAN

The death of Susan B. Anthony has called forth a unanimous panegyric from the press of the country, and it expresses the almost universal sentiment of the people. But almost without exception the newspapers have made the mistake of laying the chief stress upon her advocacy of woman's suffrage. Miss Anthony is recalled now, it is true, because of her advocacy of that policy, but her fame in future history will rest upon something else. Of late years her splendid service in the cause of emancipation has been overlooked, but in time the credit due her for that splendid work will be recalled. It is quite true that Miss Anthony was a pioneer in the equal suffrage movement, but it is equally true that she was a pioneer in another movement that has grown into immense proportions—equal pay for equal work, whether performed by man or woman. Single-handed and alone she fought for that principle for years. Sneered at, maligned and ridiculed, she persevered through all the weary years. But she lived to see a wonderful measure of success crown her efforts in that direction. People may differ as to the measure of blessings that might accrue to women through equal suffrage, but there is no difference of opinion upon the statement that women have been vastly benefitted by her championship of equality before the paymaster. Miss Anthony lent her support to every cause calculated to benefit humanity and her voice and pen were always at the service of those who suffered.

SUDDEN ACTIVITY

District Attorney Jerome is by no means the first public official whose activity as a candidate completely overshadowed the activity displayed after the office was secured. We were led to expect great things from Mr. Jerome in the way of prosecuting fraud and crime, but his strenuous efforts as a candidate seem to have demanded an extended rest when the campaign concluded. He has now filed a couple of libel suits against Mr. Hearst, and once more we have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Jerome in activity. But Mr. Jerome strenuous in protecting himself and quiescent in protecting the interests of the people who elected him for work is not an entirely edifying spectacle. We regret that Mr. Jerome has not been as strenuous in prosecuting the insurance grafters and political corruptionists in his official capacity as he now is in commencing libel suits. Whatever his grounds for libel suit against Mr. Hearst may be, Mr. Jerome has added nothing to his fame by becoming busy with that after several months of hibernation among the complaints filed by the public which took him at his word and re-elected him to his present position.

POOR ADVICE

A London newspaper urges President Roosevelt to take a hand in the Moroccan conference at Algeiras. Mr. Roosevelt has gone just about as far on this proposition as it is safe to go. He will do well to take another look at Washington's farewell address before he yields to the suggestion of the London publisher.

The Missouri river of the west a solution of a whole lot of river navigation puzzles.