

# The Commoner.

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

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## MR. BRYAN AND CONGRESS

Mr. Hearst seems to think that he can render Mr. Clark a service by representing the speaker and Mr. Bryan as widely separated in their views upon public questions. An editorial in the New York Evening American of May 1, says: "Clark and Bryan are two exceedingly different men, so different that the defeat of one is almost sufficient to infer the election of the other." The editorial then proceeds to draw a contrast between Mr. Clark and Mr. Bryan and asserts that the congressional program is repugnant to Mr. Bryan's views as to what ought to be done. Mr. Hearst's hostility to Mr. Bryan makes it easy for Mr. Hearst to be misled in regard to Mr. Bryan's attitude, but it does not excuse him from gross misrepresentation of Mr. Bryan's position on public questions. If he were as well informed as he should be he would know that Mr. Bryan has been in hearty accord with the present congress on nearly all questions, and has differed with the members of congress on very few issues. For instance, when the original program was outlined it was not only approved by Mr. Bryan but carried out specifically the reforms demanded in the platform upon which Mr. Bryan ran in 1908.

Mr. Bryan advocated in 1908, and also through The Commoner, the overthrow of Cannonism and the substitution of the system adopted whereby the committees of the house would be selected by the house instead of by the speaker. The amendment providing for the election of senators by the people was indorsed in two of the national platforms on which Mr. Bryan ran, and was in the platform upon which he first ran for congress in 1890.

The admission of Arizona was also demanded in Mr. Bryan's platform of 1908, and he had the honor of suggesting the plan finally adopted for securing the admission of the state.

The publicity law, which was also a part of the congressional program, carried out another plank of Mr. Bryan's platform, a plank inserted in the platform at his request.

Mr. Bryan indorsed the action of congress in ratifying the reciprocity treaty, not because he approved of the treaty in detail, but because he favored anything in the line of tariff reduction.

The plan of reducing the tariff schedule by schedule rather than by a general bill also had his approval; he was a member of the ways and means committee when this plan was adopted twenty years ago.

Mr. Bryan favored the open caucus—and the open caucus was adopted after the secret caucus had given rise to widespread complaint.

Mr. Bryan commended the farmers' free list bill, the metal schedule bill, the chemical schedule bill, and the cotton schedule bill, the free sugar bill and the income tax bill. He also urged the passage of the woolen schedule bill, although he protested against any tariff being left upon wool. Free wool would have permitted a still greater reduction in the tariff on woolen goods, and he was for a greater reduction than the bill provided, but favored the bill as a great improvement over the present law, and as a great deal better than anything that can be expected from a republican congress.

Mr. Bryan urged publicity as to the recommendation of judges, and the democratic house passed the bill.

He favored publicity as to contributions made to nominate presidential candidates, and the house passed the bill.

He favored publicity as to newspaper ownership, and the house passed the bill.

He favored relief to the laboring men in the restriction of the issuance of injunctions, and the house has passed this measure. He favored election of senators by the people and the house acted on that reform. In fact, Mr. Bryan and the house have been moving along together very harmoniously.

He did not agree with the caucus in turning the money trust investigation over to the Pujo committee, and the caucus would not do it again if it had it to do over. The democrats of the house have already virtually adopted Mr. Henry's plan, and the investigation will therefore be a satisfactory one—that is all that Mr. Bryan has contended for.

There are other questions before the house where the house is preparing to carry out other planks of the Denver platform. Mr. Bryan has every reason to be satisfied with the record of the democratic congress, and Mr. Hearst should inform himself before he attempts to represent Mr. Bryan as disappointed by the action of congress. Some six and a half millions of democrats voted for Mr. Bryan—nearly all of them because they really wanted to do so, and as neither they nor Mr. Bryan have changed their views on public questions they will also be glad to approve of what congress has done.

Mr. Bryan has exercised the right of criticising members of congress who have not stood by the pledges of the party, or who have permitted Wall street to frighten them, but on most questions the members criticised have been in a very small minority; the great majority of the members of congress have lived up to their pledges like men—and Mr. Bryan has been glad to commend them.

### A BAD SIGN

Whenever you see a democrat devoting his time to warning the people against the "passion of the mob" and the "thoughtlessness of the multitude" and the "ignorance of the masses," beware of him. There are a great many dangers that are more menacing than any of these. The cunning of the greedy, the unscrupulousness of the predatory and the avarice of the beneficiary of special privilege—these are real dangers, and a democrat who does not see them, confesses that he is among them while the man who warns the public against the people in effect declares that he does not consider himself one of the people. There is no doubt that the masses might err if they were called upon to act while angry or without time for investigation but does not the same objection apply to any faction of the public as well as to the

whole public? Our elections are held at stated times or after a sufficient notice so that the people have a chance to act deliberately. If you can not trust the sense of justice among the people, there is nothing that you can trust. As Bancroft says, the universal conscience is the strongest approach that we have to the voice of God.

It is a bad sign when a democrat begins to hedge on the doctrines of popular government and to become frightened at the placing of power in the people's hands. Beware of him no matter what he calls himself and what his past record may have been.

### COMMERCE COURT DEAD

Congress has killed the commerce court, and there are few mourners. The court has been an obstruction rather than an aid because a majority of its members seemed to be biased against public interests.

### PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE

Chairman Jones of the insular affairs committee of the house has introduced a bill granting to the Philippines for eight years a qualified independence, and after that complete independence. The bill reserved to the United States such ownership, control and sovereignty over such lands as a commission appointed for the purpose may regard as necessary as coaling and naval stations, and terminal points for cables. The bill carries out the promises of the democratic platforms of 1900, 1904 and 1908. While the platform did not fix a definite time for independence the time fixed in the Jones bill is not too short, it having been now over twelve years since American occupation began. Congress has made a splendid record in carrying out the promises of the platform. It ought not to adjourn until this promise is fulfilled.