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WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

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Advice to Students

January 22, 1913.—Mr. Earl Cranston, Jr., East Side High School, Denver Colorado. My Dear Mr. Cranston: You may quote me as saying: A request for advice from a student to one who has passed middle life can best be granted by a response which will be useful, and the obligation to make such answer is the greater, when, as in this case, it is to reach a large number of students.

I need not dwell upon the necessity for education; it may be assumed that those to whom these words are addressed already appreciate the vital importance of mental training. They need rather to be warned against the temptations that come with education, and there are two which most deserve consideration:

The first temptation is to forget God; the sin of the first pair in the Garden of Eden grew out of a determination to trust the head instead of the heart. They could not see why limitations were placed upon them, and therefore they resolved upon disobedience. The mind must not think of itself too highly; it is not the commander-in-chief of man's destiny. Faith is greater than reason. Pascal truly says that "the heart has reasons that the reason can not understand, because the heart is of an infinitely higher order." Learning is good, but remember always that "the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom." Religion is the most practical thing with which man has to deal, because it alone gives him a conception of life, and furnishes a foundation upon which a moral code can be built.

The second temptation is to put selfish interests above the common good—the temptation to regard education as a means of getting ahead of others rather than as a means of larger service. Let not the training of the mind wean you from sympathy with your fellows. Education will make you stronger; put that larger strength at the service of those who are weaker and learn a lesson of paramount importance, namely, that life is measured, not by what we get out of the world, but by what we put into the world.

I venture to offer these two suggestions for your annual, in the hope that they may, in some small degree, strengthen your readers for a large contribution to the welfare of society and thus justify a large return from society. Very truly yours, W. J. BRYAN.

NO TURNING BACK

The opponents of the initiative and referendum are, according to information that reaches The Commoner office, threatening to attack the system in Missouri. It is hardly conceivable that any set of men can be found foolish enough to begin a fight upon the initiative and referendum. It is to be expected that those who profit by abuses that ought to be corrected will attempt to prevent the adoption of the initiative and referendum, and they are sometimes aided by the ultra conservatives who view any change, however good, with alarm. But when the people have once secured power to control legislation through the initiative and referendum, the

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GOOD WORK

Edward D. Mack, Texas. I enclose another postoffice money order to pay for a six months' subscription as per name and address hereto attached. I am pleased to know that The Commoner accepts my proposition of nation-wide and permanent circulation plan. I feel the problem of the democratic party is the application of democratic effectiveness and simplicity to the twentieth century progress so that all useful occupations and industries may prosper in a material way and people thus engaged may go forward in spiritual and mental attainments.

battle is over, and can not be renewed. Reforms do not turn backward, and the initiative and referendum, taken together, constitute one of the great governmental reforms of the present day.

It is well that the friends of this reform should be on the alert and ready to resist any turning backward.

HOME RULE VICTORIOUS

Home rule for Ireland now seems sure. It has passed the house of commons by over one hundred majority. The house of lords will, it is reported, reject it, but according to new rules this only means two years' delay. Then if the measure passes the house of commons again it becomes a law notwithstanding the protest of the lords. As the issue has been submitted to the people it would seem quite certain that this great reform, to which Gladstone gave so many of the best years of his life, is nearing realization. It is a long delayed act of justice to the Irish people and will be generally approved throughout the world.

COLONEL CHARLES H. JONES

Colonel Charles H. Jones, for many years managing editor of the New York World and later editor of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, died recently in Italy. He was born in Georgia, and at the age of 15 enlisted in the confederate army. Several years ago he retired from daily journalism. He never lost his interest in public affairs. He rendered faithful service to the democratic party and Mr. Bryan counted him among his personal friends. Colonel Jones did not live in vain, and the young men of America will find in his life work great inspiration for good.

GOOD FOR TEXAS

The Texas legislature did well in electing Morris Sheppard for the short as well as the long term. Mr. Sheppard's majority was large in both houses, and his election to the short term was made in the face of special pleas offered by the friends of former Senator Bailey. Texas has, however, no disposition for trifling with the public service. Mr. Sheppard understands what the people of Texas want and he is in sympathy with their democratic principles.

WASHINGTON'S NEW GOVERNOR

Washington's new democratic governor, Ernest Lister, has entered upon his official duties. His inaugural address was a very creditable document—progressive from beginning to end. Democracy is fortunate in the character of the men elevated to high positions this year—the party can afford to be judged by them.

THE PRESIDENT'S PRIVATE SECRETARY

Governor Wilson has announced that Joseph P. Tumulty, who has long been his private secretary, will be the new secretary to the president.

That Seniority Rule

How the reactionary democrats do attack The Commoner for its editorial on the "Blight of Seniority!"

BUT THEY DO NOT ANSWER IT.

They can not answer it. Where merit goes with seniority the seniority rule does not NEED to be resorted to; where merit does NOT go with seniority, why should it be resorted to? In the army the seniority rule prevails, but the army is not a democratic institution. In the army authority comes DOWN from above, not UP from the people. Is the senate to be run on the army plan? No deserving senator will be hurt by making committee assignments according to merit—and merit includes reflection of the popular will as well as ability and experience; and it is not worth while to consider the feelings of men who put their ambitions above the public welfare.

Likewise in the house. No meritorious man will suffer. It is not democratic to build up a PERMANENT APPOINTING POWER. It is a travesty on popular government to authorize the ways and means committee to appoint the committees and then say that old members must be reappointed merely because they are now on the committee. That turns the appointment of the ways and means committee over to the LAST congress, instead of allowing the present congress to select its committees. What member of the committee will admit that he is not willing to invite judgment upon his merits? Either the rule of seniority should be abandoned or a SPECIAL COMMITTEE should be appointed to recommend persons for the various committees. Why should not the caucus select the chairman of the important committees? And why should the speaker be excluded from the committee to select committees? If the people are to rule, two things are necessary: First, the committees appointed to select committees should reflect the sentiment of the present—NOT A FORMER—congress; and, second, the recommendations should be acted upon by the caucus so that any injustice done can be corrected.

IS LIQUOR AN EXCEPTION?

The states are entrusted with the making of laws regulating marriage and divorce, the care of children, the disposition of estates and the protection of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The state can even take life in the enforcement of its own laws—is it not to be trusted in the matter of liquor legislation? Is the right to violate the liquor laws of a state the only sacred right?

INCOME TAX VICTORIOUS

With the ratification by West Virginia, Delaware, Wyoming and New Mexico of the proposed constitutional amendment providing for the federal income tax the United States has adopted that great reform. A law will now be necessary to provide the details for this tax. Washington dispatches say that the new law will exempt all incomes below \$4,000 or \$5,000.

RENEWALS NOW DUE

The close of the subscription year for the great bulk of Commoner subscribers ended with the last issue in January. Subscriptions ending at this time should be renewed with as little delay as possible in order to facilitate the work of changing and re-entering the addresses on our subscription books and obviate expense of sending out statements announcing that renewals are due. Subscribers are asked to assist by sending their renewals promptly.