

## Let the People Rule

The New Republic quotes H. L. Mencken as saying:

"The problem of Democratic government narrows down to this: how is the relatively enlightened and reputable minority to break the hold of such mountebanks (the present office-holding class) upon the votes of the anthropoid majority? . . . The man of education and self respect may not run with the mob and he may not yield to it supinely, but what is to prevent him deliberately pulling its nose? What is to prevent him playing upon its fears and credulities to good ends as a physician plays upon them by giving its members bread pills, or as a holy clerk seeking to bring it up to relative decency, scares it with tales of a mythical hell? In brief, what is to prevent him from swallowing his political prejudice . . . in order to channel and guide the prejudice of his inferiors?"

Mr. Mencken's contempt for popular government is based on a fundamental bias which manifests itself along several lines of thought. Men of that kind show their lack of respect for the masses no matter what subject is under consideration. In matters of government they consider "the people" lacking in the intelligence necessary to govern themselves.

Alexander Hamilton, let it be remembered, belonged to this class. He divided society into two classes, "the well-born and the not so well born," the well-born being born to rule and the not so well-born being born to be ruled. Because our government rested upon popular suffrage he had little faith in its stability. In fact, he fought a duel, in spite of his conviction against duelling, because he thought the government was going to fall and needed a strong man like himself to save it from the people.

Mr. Mencken carries the Hamiltonian disgust with the people to its highest power and from his little throne looks down upon what he regards as inferior people.

Mr. Mencken finds his counterpart in two other lines of thought. We have the plutocrats who distrust the poor. They make money the measure of the man and would exclude from suffrage or participation in government all whose possessions do not amount to a certain minimum—this minimum being higher or lower according to the amount possessed by the man who proposes the property qualifications.

The third class has appeared among educators who are so afraid of what they term "the ignorance of the masses" they would not allow the taxpayers to decide what shall be taught by the instructors whom they employ.

In all three classes this snobbishness, whether it rests upon assuming superiority in knowledge of government, in possession of property or in the number of college degrees secured, is hostile to American ideals and American institutions; it is a revival of the old "taxation without representation" system that brought on the war for American Independence.

The people are sovereign; they alone can be trusted with control of that for which they pay. Government OF the people, FOR the people, and BY the people is the nation's hope—any other system leads to danger.

W. J. BRYAN.

### A TIMELY WARNING

Dr. Alfred Waterson, principal of Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts, delivered a timely warning to the Chicago Association of Commerce recently. He said:

"The stage, the movies and modern literature, with their mocking of married life, have painted in flaming colors for youth that which is subnormal. He declared vice is made exalted, virtue made repugnant.

"On the quality of the citizenship of the future depends the stability and permanence of your industries.

"The raw material of youth, like the raw material of other products, is of tremendous concern."

Dr. Stearns then told a story of the social life of Boston, related to him by a returned soldier, who had been "dragged down" by the war and who was striving to recover.

"This soldier came to me," he said, "and told me that every dance he went to was wrong morally. He said he found two-thirds of the girls and all of the boys drunk, in defiance of the law.

"This man told me he was requested by the

hostess of a dinner he attended to escort an unconscious girl to her home. He called a cab and went to her residence.

"Her mother met him as he came in the door. She was smiling. She said not one word of her daughter coming home in that condition."

In youth, the doctor said, three things exerted the greatest influence. "They are home, the ideal home," he said, "religion and his belief in the conviction of the inherent purity of womankind. When religion is gone in youth, then will have appeared the first evidence of national decay."

But what else can be expected if students are convinced that the Bible is a lie and that instead of being made by the Almighty for a purpose they are simply improved apes. God is put so far away that prayer is made an empty thing with no hereafter with its rewards and punishments. How can we expect a life according to high ideals? Is it not time for the Christians of the country to awaken to the demoralizing influence of a brutish doctrine?

### THE BIBLE TALKS

St. Paul, Minn., June 17, 1922.—The Commoner, Lincoln, Neb. Dear Sirs: At first I kind of resented Mr. William Jennings Bryan's Bible Talks, published in The Commoner; nevertheless I have read such with great interest and come to the conclusion, that the readers owe him gratitude for the good work which he is doing; besides, I would go one step further, and recommend, that, among other advertisements, the paper should publish The Ten Commandments. It would surely awaken the readers to a high sense of responsibility in this world, moreover, it would tend to spread the news, that, at least The Commoner published Bible Sermons, coupled with The Decalogue, not forgotten; and, further, it would bring a re-reading weekly of the Constitution given by God to Moses His Premier—the leader of the then Hebrew race. It would remind the reader, that, when the American Constitution was being framed for all generations of true Americans, its framers were strict followers of The Decalogue.

I would like to see Mr. Bryan deliver his Sermons to Jews and Catholics, besides to Protestants, with the view of making them come in, and not let them feel, as they now do, that he is a propagator and proselyter, only of the Protestant faith.

Respectfully submitted,

MORITZ HEIM.

En Route, June 24, 1922.—Mr. Moritz Heim, St. Paul, Minn. My dear Mr. Heim: As you are willing to have your letter published, I shall give the readers of The Commoner the benefit of it and my reply. I appreciate very much the openness of mind which you manifest. You have doubtless noticed that my Bible Talks have to do with lessons taken from the Old Testament as well as from the new, and you have seen how I, like other Christians, defend the Old Testament as a very necessary part of the Christian Bible. My Bible Talks are not addressed to any particular church or sect. I, of course, speak from the Christian standpoint but I deal with religion so fundamentally that no one can take offense. I have had prominent Catholics commend my book, "In His Image" because my lectures are broad and unbiased, except as one is biased toward his own religious faith.

Most of my arguments, especially those against evolution applied to man, appeal as strongly to the Jew as to the Gentile and to Catholics as well as to Protestants. I am defending the spiritual in life against the attacks of materialism and in doing that I ought to have the sympathy of the Jews for their religion is eminently spiritual. I defend the inspiration of the Old Testament equally with the New and I am sure that your co-religionists will find as you have, that there is so much about which we agree that they will not be offended at what I say on subjects about which we differ.

Appreciating the spirit of your letter, I am

Very truly yours,

W. J. BRYAN.

The Republicans who are engaged in making a new tariff have decided to make another appeal for the farmer vote, that has shown unmistakable signs of slipping away from it, by in-takable signs of slipping away from it, by increasing materially the original duties on wheat and corn. Most western agriculturalists, however, are waiting to be enlightened on how a tariff on their products can help the prices they get off on their exports that must be sold in for them when the exports that must be sold in a world market that fixes the prices so greatly exceed the imports from which they would be protected.

## A New Style Religion

The Literary Digest of June 24 gives a column of its valuable space to a Columbus, O., group known as "The Theological Seventeen," made up of so-called "liberal-minded ministers" who think that the time has come to offer a "more rational, scientific and progressive presentation of the Christian faith." They include six Methodists, four Congregationalists, three Episcopalians, one Baptist, and one Presbyterian (only fifteen—the other two being hoped for).

It will be noticed that they want "a more rational, scientific and progressive Christian faith." This would seem to indict orthodox Christianity as unreasonable, unscientific, and unprogressive. The issue is really between religion and mind-worship. Religion gives supremacy to the heart and makes the mind the servant of the heart to carry out the heart's decrees. The "Theological Seventeen" (but why use the word "theological" when their attack is aimed specially at theology?) want a "rational religion." That puts the reason first. It is the RATIONAL against the SPIRITUAL conception of life.

They want a "scientific" religion; that puts the scientist above the minister. They bow to him as if he were the custodian of truth, a supreme court before which the minister must take his sermons for approval. The Bible is AUTHENTIC; it is the Word of God, but we are told by the rationalists that thinking people cannot accept the Bible because it is contrary to science. The conflict is not between the Bible and science, but between the Bible and the GUESSES of scientists which are NOT SUPPORTED BY FACT. Evolution applied to man, for instance, which some substitute for the Bible account of creation, is not supported by a single fact—only by presumptions and assumptions. A million separate and distinct species deny and disprove the hypothesis; not a single species can be found to testify to its truth, yet this unsupported guess is substituted for the Bible.

The "Theological (?) Seventeen" want a "progressive" religion. What progress can they hope for if Christianity is the final word in religion? We go back to the Ten Commandments for the foundation of our statute law and to the Sermon on the Mount for rules that govern our spiritual development. What are the Seventeen expecting in the future? They seem dissatisfied with God, the Bible, and Christ—to whom and to what do they look? Progress means motion forward. Would it not be well for them to indicate the direction in which they are going and their objective? They assume to look down upon the Bible and to decide what parts of it are worthy to be accepted. They thus give the presumption of infallibility to their own judgments instead of to the Bible. What reason have they to believe—these rationalists—that they are better authority than Moses and the prophets, than Christ and the apostles?

But the situation is not hopeless; there are about two hundred and fifty ministers in Columbus and considerable less than one-tenth of them are dissatisfied with Christianity as it is taught.

The masses have little use for the doctrine of a monkey ancestry or for the philosophy of those who look to the brute for interpretations of themselves. The people prefer to believe that man was made in the image of God and should look upward for inspiration. Spiritual, heartfelt, authentic Christianity still stands—and will stand.

W. J. BRYAN.

### DRY WORLD IN 15 YEARS, PUSSYFOOT TELLS ENGLAND

A Liverpool, dispatch, dated July 2, says: William E. ("Pussyfoot") Johnson invaded England yesterday and began to organize what he termed a world convention against alcoholism, which is to be held at Toronto, November 19. The reformer told the British newspapers he expected England to go dry in ten years and the world in fifteen. He said the economic burdens of the European nations was so overwhelming that they had to unload something, and alcohol was the easiest.

The raw wool duty in the Senate tariff bill is almost on a level with that in Schedule K, which President Taft declared was indefensible, and which, when he tried to defend it, cost him a reelection. Apparently the Republican party does not belong to that gallant group of adventurers who are willing to try a thing just once. The Republican leaders, we would guess, rather belong to those whose lives are guided by the motto, if at first you don't succeed try, try again.