THE INFLUENCE OF WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN
ON THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

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THE INFLUENCE OF WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN
ON THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps no public man of the United States has been the subject of more comment than has William Jennings Bryan, the Great Commoner of America. Books have been written about him, articles with this well-known man as subject have been published in practically all the leading magazines, and very few history books have been printed in the last thirty years that do not include his name. Nor has any man received a greater variety of comments. They range all the way from the highest of praise to the bitterest criticism. But whether these writers be praising or criticizing, they all admit that he was the leader of his party.

Reared in an atmosphere of dignity and refinement, Bryan received an early training that was excellent preparation for the life he was to follow. His father, Silas Lillard Bryan, was a man of strong character and deep religious convictions. Since he was rated as one of the best lawyers in Southern Illinois, he probably inspired his son to choose the same profession. He began at an early day to train young William to be a Bible student, but he was also a pal with his son and often went hunting with him. Mariah Elizabeth Jennings, his mother, was a refined Christian lady of quiet dignity.
who was devoted to her family. Having moved to the farm when William was six years of age, she was his only teacher until he was ten years old. They were neither rich nor poverty stricken, but were spoken of as being in "comfortable circumstances."

In later years Bryan felt indebted to both his parents for the training which he had received during the formative period of his life. He said that as a result of his early religious influence, he always hated the vices of intemperance, gambling, and profanity. The antipathy that he formed for these evils probably helped to shape his policies in later life.

Bryan entered public school in Salem, Illinois, at ten years of age, but was not an outstanding student. Five years later he went to Jacksonville, Illinois, to enter college. Here he graduated in 1881 with "the highest honors" and two years later received his degree from the Chicago Union College of Law. The Master's degree was conferred upon him the following year. He then "hung out his shingle" in Jacksonville, Illinois, and waited for clients.

About this time Bryan was married to Mary Elizabeth Baird, who had been a student at Jacksonville Academy. She proved to be a great help and inspiration to her husband during the remainder of his life.

As the young attorney waited for the clients that did not come, he became discouraged. There were too many old
and established lawyers in the town for a beginner to get a start; he, therefore, like many others, went west. He made his new home in Lincoln, Nebraska, where he soon won friends and established a practice.

Bryan at once became active in the politics of the state, and, in a few months after arriving there, was sent as a delegate from his county to the Democratic State Convention. In 1890 he was nominated as the Democratic candidate for Congress. This is an evidence of the high esteem in which he was held, because, since the district was so decidedly Republican, it was necessary for the Democrats to nominate some one strong enough to obtain the full support of the party.

After he was nominated, this candidate embarked upon a season of campaigning that had probably never before been surpassed. He spoke in every county in the district, making several addresses per day. Finally, he challenged his opponent to a series of eleven debates and Mr. Connell accepted. These speeches attracted state-wide attention, and great crowds came to hear the young orator. At one of his debates he was presented with a sword and shield of white roses. On the shield was a design of red flowers spelling TRUTH, and on the sword were the letters ELOQUENCE. Thus Bryan at an early day had endeared himself in the hearts of the Nebraskans, and this feeling was soon to spread over the entire country. That he had won the confidence of the people is attested by the
fact that that year Nebraska sent a Democratic Congressman to Washington for the first time.

It is usually customary for new members of Congress to remain quiet the first term, but Bryan was never known to stay quiet very long. At the beginning of the session he got into an affray over who was to be Speaker of the House, and, as his side won, he was rewarded by receiving a position on the coveted Ways and Means Committee, where he remained throughout his stay in Congress.

Bryan was re-elected in 1892, and two years later received the nomination for Senator but was defeated. In September of that year he became chief of the editorial staff of the Omaha World Herald. Through his discussions of the public questions in the columns of this paper, he was able to keep in touch with the people. In 1896 he went to the Democratic National Convention at Chicago, where his famous "Cross of Gold" speech attracted the attention of the whole country. He received the Democratic nomination for President but was unable to win the election. This same thing occurred in 1900 and 1908. Although not a candidate in 1904 and 1912, Bryan served on the platform committee and was very influential in formulating the policies that were adopted by the party.

In the meantime Bryan was busy lecturing and writing articles for The Commoner, a weekly paper which he established after the election of 1900. He also had a habit of speak-
ing from rear platforms of trains as he traveled through the
country. Wherever he spoke, great crowds were there to hear
him, and thousands of people read his editorials and articles.

What was the secret of Bryan's power over the people and
of his influence on his party? In order to answer that ques-
tion, it will be necessary to understand what the Democratic
Party has been striving to do and the conditions under which
it has been laboring. In trying to explain the major purposes
of the party, I cannot put it in better words than Agar, who
said:

The role of the Democratic Party since the Civil
War is a sharp contrast to its pre-war role. From
Jefferson to Davis, one of the party's major purposes
was to prevent the growth of an economic system which
it felt would be disastrous. Since the 1860's (when
the party began to recover from the Civil War) one
of the party's major purposes has been to undo an eco-
nomic system which is already disastrous. This is a
hard job. Much of the time the party has not cared
to face the exigent task. Much of the time since the
Civil War the party has either been sound asleep or
has been a cheap imitator of the Republican Party. But
when it has amounted to anything at all—as under
Bryan, Wilson, Roosevelt—the party has been fumbling
with the old problem: how to run a would-be democracy
the size of an empire without exploiting some regions
for the benefit of others. And to this has been added
a new problem: how to run a would-be democracy which
is also a rich capitalism without exploiting the pro-
letarian class.1

Bryan, who was born in 1860, grew up with this capitalis-
tic system. Being a son of the Middle West, he felt the
strain of the conditions in the early 90's. His was an at-

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1Herbert Agar, The Pursuit of Happiness, p. 246.
mosphere of rebellion against industrial oligarchy and plutocracy. The people of his section came to view the trusts, the railroads, and all big business as economic enemies; and the farmer and laboring man, struggling under the load of a depression, were ready for almost any measure of relief. The West was in debt to the East. The people had borrowed money to improve their land and were depending upon increased land values and good prices for their products to pay their creditors, but these did not come. From 1866 to 1875 corn averaged forty-seven cents a bushel; in the next ten years the average had dropped to a little over thirty-nine cents, and by 1896 it had fallen to twenty-one cents. The prices of other farm products were falling in a similar manner. The thing that appealed to them as a remedy for this condition was cheap money, and this led to a cry for free silver or bimetallism.

Another source of discontent among the people was the abuses of the railroads. The West had wanted railroads and had been willing to make any sacrifice in order to get them, and now they were proving to be more of a curse than a blessing. The tracks were often laid far enough from old towns to ruin them, and sites for new ones were laid out. The lots for these towns, having been bought by Eastern investors, were sold to the settlers for a nice profit.

Grain elevators, owned by people who were secretly in league with the railroads, were being stationed along the
tracks. The farmers would harvest their wheat, but the railroad rates would be so high that they would be forced to sell to these elevators at a very low price. After the grain had been bought, the freight rates would suddenly go down, and the grain would be taken to distant markets.

This was a period when a few men were getting rich at the expense of the multitudes. Fortunes were being accumulated by the Hills, the Pullmans, the Armours, and others. In this mad rush for wealth, the common man was forgotten and his rights ignored. The times were demanding a champion for this class of people, and no one was better prepared for the position than our Peerless Leader.

Bryan represented the South and West in their demands against the Center and East. He seemed to be the only logical Presidential nominee in 1896, and the campaigns of 1900 and 1908 served to strengthen the bonds between him and the people. Although not victorious himself, his doctrines have found their ways into succeeding Democratic platforms, and, in most cases, have finally found themselves on the statute books of our country. Some of Bryan's critics have accused him of shifting issues in order to be on the popular side. As a matter of fact, he was more often on the unpopular side. One author expressed what appeared to be his attitude in the following words:

... Fundamentally it was not the currency or the tariff or imperialism that Bryan assailed, although he
attacked all three of these at various times, but the tendency inherent in the current conditions to establish a plutocratic government. While he shifted the specific issues of his campaign from time to time, undoubtedly he faced in the same direction all the time. 2

Bryan was a group champion instead of a representative of all interests. He stood for the laboring man and the farmer, and by them he was hailed as an emancipator. His policies were perhaps not always the most practical. For instance, he would have given the Philippines their independence before they were ready for self-governement because he believed so strongly in freedom for all people, and it is doubtful if his peace proposals during the World War would have worked in actual practice. He was an idealist, and his sentiment sometimes overshadowed his judgment.

He would not claim originality for all the issues for which he fought; most of them were taken from earlier platforms, but it took someone with force, leadership, and eloquence to get these issues before the public. Bryan possessed all these qualities and, in addition, a will to fight for his convictions.

2 Charles E. Merriam, Four American Party Leaders, p. 65.
CHAPTER II

CURRENCY

When one thinks of Bryan, he invariably thinks of bimetallism in spite of the fact that the silver question was an issue in only two of his campaigns; it was a sectional demand of the West whose interest Bryan always championed. Then too, it was partly through his eloquence in defending this issue that the currency question was brought to public attention.

The South and the West were the debtor sections of the country while the East was the creditor. Also, the South and the West were the producers of the raw materials. Quite naturally the debtor section with its raw materials to sell would favor cheap and plentiful money so that it would not take as many bushels of wheat to pay a debt. The creditors, on the other hand, would prefer expensive money so they could purchase more with the money paid them by the producer. Then too, the West had opened silver mines and wanted a market. Agar sums up the situation in the following words:

The sectional quarrel about money became acute during the Cleveland-Bryan era because for the first time in our history the South and the West were being subjected to the unrestrained effects of the Hamiltonian economic program. From the Presidency of Washington until the nullification crisis in 1833, the Democratic party had hampered the Hamiltonian system
and kept it from anything except a pacemical operation and from 1833 until 1861 the Democratic party had abolished the Hamiltonian system. But beginning with the Civil War that system had come into its own.

High tariffs and the readiness to sacrifice agriculture to the well-being of industry; centralized finance and the readiness to sacrifice the back country to the well-being of the money capitals; belief in the superiority of the rich and well-born and the readiness to sacrifice the working-class to the well-being of the promoters; belief in the unrestricted freedom of enterprise, even if such freedom meant that most men were denied what the Virginia and Massachusetts constitutions called an inalienable right (the means of acquiring and possessing property! the entire Hamiltonian experiment was being tried."

Greenbacks (paper money not redeemable in metal) were issued during the Civil War. This type of currency was bitterly opposed by the East because its tendency to fluctuate made the lender fearful that he would receive money in payment of debts that had less purchasing power than the money he had lent. That section of the country, therefore, began to demand that the greenbacks be withdrawn from circulation while the South and West were bitterly opposed to such a measure. In 1875, Congress succeeded in passing a bill that provided for the redemption in specie of greenbacks when presented at the Treasury in sums of not less than $50.

The fight over silver and the fight over greenbacks developed side by side. Before 1873, the United States coined both gold and silver at a rate determined by Congress. It had been difficult to get the proper ratio, and one metal was always getting overvalued, thus driving the other out of

\[\text{\textsuperscript{2}Ager, op. cit., p. 278.}\]
circulation. In 1873, a Republican Congress passed a bill to stop the coinage of standard silver dollars weighing 412 1/2 grains but provided for the coinage of a silver dollar weighing 490 grains which became known as the trade dollar. The half dollar, quarter dollar, dime, and half dime were retained, and the silver dollars already in existence were not withdrawn from circulation. This type of money had not been coined for a number of years because there was no demand for it; therefore the act merely legalized a situation that was already in existence. The bill passed with very little debate, and the general public paid no attention to what had been done until a few years later when the silver mines in the West were opened. This should have meant cheaper money and higher prices, but the Act of 1873 caused a lowering of prices.

A Democratic Congressman from Missouri, Richard Parks Bland, attempted to get the results of this enactment before the public. Measures were introduced in Congress by Mr. Bland and other Democrats to "restore silver to its rightful place as standard money." The act demonetizing silver came to be known as the Crime of 1873.

The silver agitators were so insistent that in 1878 Congress passed the Bland-Allison Act. This authorized the Treasury to acquire each month not less than $2,000,000 nor more than $4,000,000 worth of silver bullion and coin as many silver dollars. Certificates were furnished to all who
preferred paper to metal. In order that their parity with other paper money might be maintained, certificates were indirectly exchangeable for gold dollars.

For a number of years after the Bland-Allison Act was passed, the supply of silver grew so much more rapidly than the gold that the market ratio became one to almost thirty-two. Still the silver producers and the inflationists favored the demands of the silverites. They were urging Congress to pass a law authorizing free and unlimited coinage of silver at the ratio of one to sixteen.

The Democrats had taken no actual stand on the monetary issue. The greenback and silver agitators had their own political parties. The Democratic party was divided on the question. The East stood for what they called sound money, while the South and West stood for silver and paper.

In 1884, when Cleveland was elected President, the Democrats felt that this was their opportunity. Cleveland, however, did not favor their demands and called a special session of Congress to reduce silver to the status of a commodity and to emphasize the gold standard as a fixed policy, but he failed to secure the repeal of the Bland-Allison Bill. After this, the monetary question occupied an important place in politics.

In the campaign of 1888, the Republicans took advantage of Cleveland's attitude toward silver and came out with a plank favoring both gold and silver as money. They were
successful in electing Harrison, and in July, 1890 the Silver Purchase Law was passed. This law repealed the Silver Purchase clauses of the Bland-Allison Act and provided for the monthly purchase of 4,500,000 ounces of silver bullion.

In 1892, Cleveland was again elected to the Presidency, and he at once began working for the repeal of the Silver Purchase Act. The country was undergoing a financial strain and the repeal meant less money and lower prices for the farmers. Cleveland was convinced that bimetallism was the wrong thing for the country, and Bryan, then a Congressman from Nebraska, was as thoroughly convinced that it was the only right policy to pursue. A special session of Congress was called, and, in spite of the vigorous protests of William Jennings Bryan and others, the Silver Purchase Act was repealed. The result of this was a split in the Democratic party.

Immediately after this special session, Bryan began his fight for free silver by writing newspaper articles and making public speeches. He and Bland drew up an appeal to the Democratic party in which he declared that this "was the beginning of the successful effort on the part of the silver Democrats to take control of the Democratic organization." It further stated that "We believe that it is the duty of the majority, and within their power, to take charge of the party organization and make the Democratic party an effective instrument in the accomplishment of needed reforms."²

²Asar, op. cit., p. 298.
The spring of 1896 saw the South and West coming under the influence of the silverites. Thirty Democratic state conventions had declared for free silver. In the convention that year the silverite majority succeeded in gaining control.

The man who captured the convention that year was one who had not before had the attention of the country. This man emerging from comparative obscurity to the leadership of his party was the Great Commoner, William Jennings Bryan. Charles Ross, who was a spectator at the convention, describes the scene when Bryan took the platform in the following words:

The delegates from the silver states had been sullenly looking on, but when Bryan took his place, they arose en masse. Those who were applauding the speeches of Hill and his allies were continuing their applause when the Bryan enthusiasm broke loose, and thus the entire audience was for a time convulsed in a complex and yet unanimous demonstration.

The western sun fell upon the stage and in this spotlight Mr. Bryan stood.

With the first sentence the musical and clearly enunciated tones went into every recess of the Coliseum and the distinctness with which he was heard added charm and effect to his oration. 3

Harry Park Thurston Peck describes the scene as follows:

Until now there had spoken no man to whom that riotous assembly would listen with respect . . . . As he confronted the 20,000 yelling, cursing, shouting men before him, they felt at once that indescribable magnetic thrill which beasts and men alike experience in the presence of a master. Serene and

self-possessed, and with a smile upon his lips, he faced
the roaring multitude with a splendid consciousness of
power. Before a single word had been uttered by him,
the pandemonium sank to an inarticulate murmur, and when
he began to speak, even this was hushed to the profound-
est silence. 4

Here was a man championing the cause of the common people
in language never before heard. When he gave his interpreta-
tion of the business man, we can understand why the crowd
listened:

We say to you that you have made the definition of
a business man too limited in its application. The man
who is employed for wages is as much a business man as
his employer, the attorney in a country town is as much
a business man as the corporation counsel in a great
metropolis; the merchant at the cross-roads store is
as much a business man as the merchant of New York;
the farmer who goes forth in the morning and toils all
day—who begins in the spring and toils all summer—
and who by the application of brain and muscle to the
natural resources of the country creates wealth, is as
much a business man as the man who goes upon the board
of trade and bets upon the price of grain; the miners
who go down a thousand feet into the earth, or climb
two thousand feet upon the cliffs, and bring forth
from their hiding places the precious metals to be poured
into the channels of trade are as much business men
as the few financial magnates who, in a back room,
corner the money of the world. We come to speak for
this broader class of business men. 5

In another part of his speech he said:

You come to us and tell us that the great cities are
in favor of the gold standard; we reply that the great
cities rest upon our broad and fertile prairies. Burn
down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities
will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our

4Harry Thurston Peck, Twenty Years of the Republic, p. 498.
5William Jennings Bryan, Speeches of William Jennings
farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country. 6

Then the crowning climax came when he ended with these words:

... If they dare to come out in the open field and defend the gold standard as a good thing, we will fight them to the uttermost. Having behind us the producing masses of this nation and the world, supported by the commercial interests, and the toilers everywhere, we will answer their demand for a gold standard by saying to them: You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns, you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold. 7

After this speech Rosser said: "A convention scene was enacted unparalleled before or since. It presented an animate panorama, vivid in its actuality, but indescribable." 8

Leading men of the party wanted to nominate him by acclamation at once, but Bryan would not consent to this, saying he wanted the convention to act on deliberate judgment rather than the impulse of hysteria. He was nominated and the following monetary plank was adopted:

Recognizing that the money question is paramount to all others at this time, we invite attention to the fact that the federal Constitution named silver and gold together as the money metals of the United States, and that the first coinage law passed by Congress under the Constitution made the silver dollar the monetary unit and admitted gold to free coinage at a ratio based upon the silver-dollar unit.

We declare that the act of 1873 demonetizing silver without the knowledge and approval of the American

6Ibid., p. 243. 7Ibid., p. 249.
8Rosser, op. cit., p. 45.
people, has resulted in the appreciation of gold and a corresponding fall in the prices of commodities produced by the people; a heavy increase in the burden of taxation and of all debts, public and private; the enrichment of the money-lending class at home and abroad; the prostration of industry and impoverishment of the people.

We are unalterably opposed to monometallism which has locked fast the prosperity of an industrial people in the paralysis of hard times. Gold monometallism is a British policy, and its adoption has brought other nations into financial servitude to London. It is not only un-American, but anti-American, and it can be fastened on the United States only by the stifling of that spirit and love of liberty which proclaimed our political independence in 1776 and won it in the War of the Revolution.

We demand the free and unlimited coinage of both silver and gold at the present legal ratio of 15 to 1, without waiting for the aid or consent of any other nation. We demand that the standard silver dollar shall be a full legal tender, equally with gold, for all debts, public and private, and we favor such legislation as will prevent for the future the demonetization of any kind of legal-tender money by private contract.

We are opposed to the policy and practice of surrendering to the holders of the obligations of the United States the option reserved by law to the government of redeeming such obligations in either silver coin or gold coin.

Interest-Bearing Bonds

We are opposed to the issuing of interest-bearing bonds of the United States in time of peace, and condemn the trafficking with bank syndicates, which, in exchange for bonds and at an enormous profit to themselves, supply the federal treasury with gold to maintain the policy of gold monometallism.

Against National Banks

Congress alone has the power to coin and issue money, and President Jackson declared that this power could not be delegated to corporations or individuals. We therefore denounce the issuance of notes intended to circulate as money by national banks as in derogation of the Constitution, and we demand that all paper which is made a legal tender for public and private debts, or which is receivable for dues to the United States, shall be issued by the government of the United States, and shall be redeemable in coin.\(^9\)

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The Republicans nominated McKinley, and their monetary plank declared:

We are unalterably opposed to every measure calculated to debase our currency or impair the credit of our country. We are, therefore, opposed to the free coinage of silver except by international agreement with the leading commercial nations of the world, which we pledge ourselves to promote, and until such agreement can be obtained, the existing gold standard must be preserved. All our silver and paper currency must be maintained at parity with gold, and we favor all measures designed to maintain inviolably the obligations of the United States and all our money, whether coin or paper, at the present standard, the standard of the most enlightened nations of the earth.\(^\text{10}\)

The silver issue of 1896 caused the Democratic Party to split. A National Democratic party was organized in Indianapolis and nominated John Palmer. Laboring men were told that their wages and jobs depended upon a Republican victory. Palmer and McKinley got many of the Democratic votes. The outcome was defeat for Bryan.

After 1896 conditions caused the silver plank of Bryan to become obsolete. There was a great increase in the world's gold supply. New gold mines were opened and gold became plentiful. Bryan was not forgotten by the Democrats of the West and the South, and, in 1900 was again nominated for the Presidency. Although urged to leave silver out of his platform, he insisted on including it. He did, however, make anti-imperialism instead of silver his main issue. Bryan was again defeated and in that year the Gold Standard Act was passed.

\(^{10}\) Ibid., pp. 301-2.
Other currency reforms advocated by Bryan included non-issuance of bank notes, improvement of the banking system, and insuring bank deposits.

In his platform of 1896 he denounced the issuance of bank notes intended to circulate as money. Again in 1900 his platform stated:

We are opposed to this private corporation paper circulated as money, but without legal tender qualities and demand the retirement of the national bank notes as fast as government paper or silver certificates can be substituted for them. 11

In 1908 his platform had the following to say about currency:

We believe that insofar as the needs of commerce require an emergency currency, such currency should be issued and controlled by the Federal Government. 12

Bryan was on the committee that wrote Wilson's platform of 1912. He succeeded in getting a plank in this platform that paved the way for the currency legislation which was passed during Wilson's administration.

One of these reforms was the Federal Reserve Act upon which Bryan had a great deal of influence. He would not approve an act that provided for a board ruled by bankers instead of controlling them. Neither would he consent to the


issuing of notes of private banks. The following statement shows what part Bryan had in the making of the bill.

The bill as drawn contained the bank-note feature which was in opposition to a plank in the Democratic platform declarations. Mr. Bryan informed President Wilson of his opposition to the feature and after considerable difficulty succeeded in convincing Wilson that he (Bryan) was right.

It was through Mr. Bryan's influence, therefore, that a serious defect was removed from the bill, and the way cleared for the passage of this most important economic measure.15

The monetary program under the present Democratic administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt seems, to a certain extent, to reflect Bryanism. The silver agreement in 1933 authorized the President to fix the weight of the silver dollar at a definite ratio in relation to the gold dollar and to provide for the unlimited free coinage of silver at the fixed ratio. This was to remain in effect until December 31, 1937.

In December, 1937, the Silver Purchase Bill was passed which instructed the Secretary of the Treasury to purchase silver at home and abroad until its monetary stock equaled one-fourth that of the metal stock of the country. He was to pay what he deemed fit, up to but not above silver's monetary value ($1.29 an ounce); in the case of silver in the United States on May, 1934, above fifty cents an ounce was not to be paid. The government began buying silver and re-monetized it at the ratio of 27 to 1.

By an act of Congress in 1935, the Silver Purchase Act was left intact, the purchase of silver and its price were made statutory, and the price was set at 71.11 cents per ounce.

Another inflationary measure of the administration was to devalue the gold dollar to the extent that it contained 59.06 per cent of the former amount. This gave the Treasury a profit of $3,500,000,000.

Bryan advocated the insuring of federal bank deposits. All deposits in national banks up to $5,000 are now insured.

Bryan's quantitative rather than qualitative theory of money is the only major issue that did not succeed during his lifetime. The new deal, however, has broadened the monetary base. This was done because of the low prices and the general financial depression that greeted Franklin D. Roosevelt at his inauguration. The indications are that the silver issue is coming to the front again. Who knows that this pet theory of our Crusading Commoner may not yet be vindicated?
CHAPTER III

PROHIBITION

The history of temperance in the United States is as old as the history of the country itself. From the founding of Jamestown Colony until the outbreak of the Revolutionary War there was a great deal of agitation against the evil of drunkenness, but with the movement for independence came also a movement for the prevention of the use of distilled liquors as a beverage.

Organized effort for national prohibition began in 1826, when the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance was founded, and for thirty years after that, organizations continued to come into existence. Then about 1856, enthusiasm began to subside as the slavery issue pushed the liquor question into the background until after the Civil War.

About 1869 the temperance movement received new impetus, when the Prohibition Party was formed, thus blazing the trail for political activity along this line. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union was organized in 1874 and gave its active cooperation to this new party.

Perhaps one of the most effective organizations for temperance reform was the Anti-Saloon League which was organized in 1893 as a state body but became national two years
later. The League soon had branches in every state in the Union. It has been very successful in its undertakings. Largely through its efforts several states adopted prohibition in the early part of the twentieth century.

The success of this organization can be attributed to its policy of building up public sentiment for a law before trying to get it passed. It was slow to take up state prohibition, because experience proved that progress could be too rapid for permanence. During the latter half of the nineteenth century prohibition amendments had been adopted by eighteen states, but by 1906, all but three had been repealed. For that reason the League followed a program of first building up a sentiment of hostility toward the saloons and then working for legislation and enforcement.

Beginning in 1881, one of the chief methods of dealing with the liquor problem was high license. This was the requirement of a high fee, usually from five hundred to a thousand dollars for the privilege of engaging in the sale of intoxicating beverages. This privilege was usually accompanied by several restrictions such as forbidding the sale of liquor to minors and habitual drunks, and saloons were required to close after certain hours at night and on Sunday.

Another method strongly advocated by opponents of the saloon was the local option under which political divisions could decide for themselves whether liquor could be sold with-
in their territory. This division might be a town, city, or county; or it might just be a residence district or a ward precinct of a city.

More than one-third of the population of our country was living in "dry" territory by 1906, and it was becoming increasingly obvious that local option could not be enforced in towns and counties that were bordered by license districts. The time was now ripe for state-wide prohibition, and the League began working toward that end. By 1910 six more states had been added to the "dry" columns, making nine in all.

About this time there began to develop some sentiment for national prohibition. The Anti-Saloon League delayed taking up this movement for several years because it wanted first to get Congress ready for such action. State prohibition was very difficult to enforce, since, on account of the Interstate Commerce Law, states could not regulate the kind of merchandise that crossed their borders. In 1914, however, the League began its fight by announcing that it was going to take its stand for a National Prohibition Resolution.

Joined by the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, about two thousand volunteers marched to the Capitol to make a united demand of Congress for the measure. Richard P. Hobson, who was to be responsible for the bill in the House, made a speech, as did Senator Norris Sheppard of Texas. The Hobson Bill lacked only sixty-three votes of getting the re-
quired number in the House. The result was so much better than had been expected that the Prohibitionists were stimulated to continue their efforts until the amendment was written into the Constitution of the United States.

These organized efforts to promote prohibition received the active cooperation of William Jennings Bryan, who was perhaps the greatest single enemy of the liquor interests. Being a total abstainer himself, his influence was always cast against the alcoholic evil, but he was slow about taking up prohibition as a political issue. Mrs. Bryan gives the following explanation for his early attitude toward the question:

The same feeling which led him to hold elections in the towns of his Congressional districts instead of appointing postmasters himself, caused him to consider carefully the liquor question. He stood for "equal rights for all and special privileges for none" and was for a time uncertain that such a drastic measure was desirable. He did not want to confuse the mind of the voter with too many issues and was unwilling to approve this reform until it was ripe for action.¹

Bryan started advocating local option in 1904; communities voted whether or not saloons would be permitted within their territories, but whiskey was easily brought into dry districts. In 1908, he declared himself in favor of county option. Opposition was high. Mayor Dahlman introduced his plank definitely opposing such a measure, and Governor Shallenberger came forth with a plank which promised that in

¹Bryan, Memoirs, p. 290.
case a county option bill was passed, he would veto it. That evening Bryan, a member of the Resolutions Committee, came to the platform with his minority report. He said:

I shall read the substitute which I offer for the majority report on this subject. We favor county option as the best method of dealing with the liquor question. I appreciate the spirit of fairness that has characterized the Democrats, who, if we can judge by what has occurred, are in a majority in this convention, and I assure you that it is with very great regret that I find myself compelled to differ from those with whom I have been associated so intimately and so pleasantly for so many years. In view of the fact that many Democrats think me responsible for the introduction of the question and accuse me of disturbing the harmony of the party at this time; in view of the fact that many feel that I have forfeited my right to your confidence, I think I am entitled to present my defense.²

In another part of his speech Bryan declared:

But I shall put it on higher ground; it is more than expedient—it is right. The Democratic party can afford to do right; the Democratic party can afford to take the moral side of a moral question. The majority report says it is a moral question. Which side will you take? Will you put the Democratic party on the moral side, or will you put it on the immoral side?³

Needless to say, his plank lost by a vote of 647 to 193.

It is significant that Dahlman's plank also lost, and Governor Shallenberger's somewhat compromising position was supported by the convention. In all probability, Bryan's influence contributed in bringing about this result. In the primary, however, Dahlman defeated Shallenberger and won the Democratic nomination for governor.

²Bryan, Speeches, p. 322.
³Ibid., p. 343.
Shortly after the convention, Bryan began his fight for national prohibition. The difficulty of preventing the importation of liquors into "dry" states convinced him that this was a problem to be handled by the nation as a whole.

So once more the Great Commoner took a stand which he knew would incur hostility. Contrary to the advice of his friends, Bryan announced that he was going to take up national prohibition. Mrs. Bryan says his argument ran like this:

It is true a man has a right to drink if he chooses and if he considers himself alone, but there are duties which he owes to society which cannot be ignored. Personal liberty is often curbed for a greater good. Laws are made to protect society against burglary, which run counter to a man's right to enjoy a burglar's kit and a dark lantern; laws against arson deprive the citizen of the right to strike a match and burn his neighbor's house. A drunken chauffeur has a right to drive a car, but when he kills people on the highway, he becomes a public menace and must be arrested, and his personal liberty is bounded by the local jail. How willingly should the people give up the right to drink, when they can, by that act, reclaim thousands of men and bring comfort to countless miserable homes. I am sure the nation will do this when it understands. It is sound at heart.4

On October 31, 1910, he hired a hall in Lincoln, Nebraska. The auditorium was packed with both Democrats and Republicans, who heard him make one of his powerful speeches endorsing nation-wide prohibition. To them he declared:

The liquor business is on the defensive; its representatives are for the most part lawless themselves and

in league with lawlessness. They are in partnership with the gambling hell and the brothel. They are the most corrupt and corrupting influence in politics, and I shall not, by voice or vote, aid them in establishing a Reign of Terror in this state. Even before the election, they are impudently attempting to question the Democracy of every member of the party who refuses to allow them to censor his speeches. They will, if successful in this campaign, insist on controlling the party.5

When asked what he would do about the Nebraska Democratic nominee for governor, he replied:

I shall neither speak for Mr. Dahlman nor vote for him. I hope to see him defeated by a majority so overwhelming as to warn the brewers, distillers, and liquor dealers to retire from Nebraska politics and allow the people to act upon the liquor question as they do upon other questions.

But whether Mr. Dahlman is elected or defeated, I shall continue to protest against the domination of our party by the liquor interests. I shall contribute whatever assistance I can to the effort which will be made to put an end to the spree upon which our party seems to have embarked. I am not willing that the party shall die of delirium tremens. An appeal will be made from Phillip drunk to Phillip sober, and I am confident that the appeal will be successful, that the party will rise again to the high plane upon which it has conducted its campaigns in this state for nearly two decades and appeal once more to the conscience and moral sense of the people.6

The liquor forces realized the influence Bryan had on his party and knew they could not have a more powerful enemy. They set about at once to destroy his leadership and did succeed in preventing his being a delegate to the National Democratic Convention in 1916. To them he said: "If the liquor

5Long, op. cit., p. 222.

6Ibid., pp. 222-23.
interests can make good their threat to destroy me politi-
cally, my death will be a warning to fathers and mothers of
the power of this foe."

From the day he made that speech in Lincoln until the
passage of the Eighteenth Amendment, he did not cease work-
ing for the reform. He went all over the country making
speeches, and his articles appeared in the leading magazines.

When President-elect Woodrow Wilson invited Bryan to
become a member of his cabinet, he asked Wilson whether his
refusing to serve intoxicating liquors from his table would
be regarded as an unsurmountable objection to his assuming
the duties of his office. Wilson replied that he could fol-
low his own wishes in the matter. Shortly after he became
Secretary of State, he and Mrs. Bryan gave a luncheon for
the ambassadors and their wives. They served grape juice
instead of wine, thus setting an example of temperance be-
fore the nation.

In 1915 and 1916 Bryan made speeches in several states
for prohibition. On April 15, 1915, he made a temperance ad-
dress to an audience in the Billy Sunday Tabernacle, and at
the conclusion, twelve thousand men made a pledge of total
abstinence from strong drink. In the autumn of 1915, he
made sixty speeches. These were all condensed into one and
presented in the United States Senate by Senator Morris Shep-
pard.
Mr. and Mrs. Bryan spent the winter of 1916 in Florida and during that time he made three important trips. On December 28, he went to Louisville, Kentucky, to attend a meeting of the National Intercollegiate Prohibition Association. While there, he met with the "dry" Democrats of the state for the purpose of beginning the fight for the submission of a state constitutional amendment for prohibition.

On the second trip he went to Columbus, Ohio, where he spoke for prohibition. He organized the "dry" Democrats there, and the movement for a state amendment for outlawing liquor began.

Bryan spoke to the Legislature of Indiana and helped with the organization of the "dry" Democrats there. Prohibition was adopted by this state. Soon after speaking at Madison, Wisconsin, and Springfield, Illinois, he was rewarded by seeing both capitals vote "dry." He also spoke to the legislatures of Missouri, Tennessee, and Louisiana.

Some people may doubt that Bryan had much influence on the movement for prohibition, but his great influence is attested to by the fact that wherever he went, large crowds greeted him. Many came for miles to see and hear him. His splendid physique and attractive appearance, coupled with an oratory that is seldom equaled and backed by the force of strong and fearless, outspoken conviction, caused Bryan to be one of the greatest speakers our nation has known. By his powerful eloquence and strength of char-
acter, he swayed his audience and caused them to see the
great national issues as he saw them. So effective was his
influence that he has been called "The Silver-tongued Orator,"
"The Peerless Leader," "The Great Commoner," and "The Crus-
sading Commoner."

In eight years after Bryan began his national campaign
against the liquor forces, the number of prohibition states
increased from eight to thirty-two. This included all the
South and the West. The latter sections were mostly Demo-
cratic.

As state after state adopted prohibition amendments,
the temperance representation in Congress increased. By
1917, sentiment had developed so rapidly that Senator Shep-
pard introduced his bill calling for a constitutional amend-
ment for permanent prohibition. The text of his bill was
as follows:

Section 1. The manufacture, sale, or transporta-
tion of intoxicating liquors within, the importation
thereof into, or the exportation thereof from, the
United States and all territories subject to the
jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is here-
by prohibited.

Section 2. This article shall be inoperative,
unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment
to the Constitution within six years from the date
of submission thereof to the states by the Congress.

Section 3. The Congress shall have the power
to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

This bill passed the Senate in August, 1917, and the
House in December of the same year. Bryan made speeches
throughout the country for the ratification of the amend-

7Ferdinand Iglehart, King Alcohol Dethroned, p. 303.
ment. In 1918 and 1919, forty-five states ratified, the only states not taking such action being Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Jersey.

The Eighteenth Amendment went into effect January 20, 1920. William Jennings Bryan was the chief speaker at the celebration in Washington. Among other things he declared: "They are dead who sought the young Child's Life." A large silver loving cup was presented to him in recognition of his service in the great fight that had just been won.

(It is impossible to give the credit to any one person or group of people for the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment. The Prohibition Party, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the Anti-Saloon League, and other organizations played very important parts in this great reform, but no one can deny the fact that William Jennings Bryan, through his leadership of and his influence on the Democratic Party, also played an important part in the movement.) The liquor interests recognized it and tried to crush him; the temperance leaders recognized him and pinned the honors on him after the battle was won. The following letter from the legislative committee of the Anti-Saloon League which was addressed to Mr. Bryan after the struggle was over, will speak for itself:

As Democracy's greatest prophet of reform, you have many times rendered conspicuous service for the right; never more so than in the present case. During all the recent months leading up to the final battle, your voice
has sounded the high note of idealism in this fight for humanity, has inspired your friends to confidence and enthusiasm, and has sent the shock of alarm throughout the ranks of the liquor forces. This period of continued and distinguished service found fit completion in your great address at the Metropolitan Methodist Episcopal Church and the overflow meeting at the First Presbyterian Church before the Annual Convention of the Anti-Saloon League of America; in your return to the national Capital for the final struggle in the House, and in your history-making memorable address to Mr. Gompers, which, added to your unquestioned influence with the members of the Congress, did so much to put the cause of temperance and prohibition "over the top."  

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8 Bryan, Memoirs, pp. 466-7.
CHAPTER IV

IMPERIALISM

While the discovery of gold and better economic conditions caused the enthusiasm for free silver to subside, another issue, imperialism, took its place. Economic and territorial expansion had already been going on in Europe for a number of years. One historian explains the imperialistic trends in Europe in the following words:

Naval power in the history of Europe went with empire. In the nineteenth century, after a period of free trade, economic nationalism returned, bringing the leading governments to tariffs, colonial expansion, and special economic concessions in countries which retained their independence. The Continent of Africa from the Mediterranean to the Cape of Good Hope, the Near East, southern and eastern Asia successively attracted the attention and rivalries of European merchants and the bourgeois governments.¹

The United States did not become interested in this expansion program until the latter part of the nineteenth century. It is true, we have extended our boundaries from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean and even purchased Alaska, but the difference in that and subsequent additions lay in our motives and intentions. Our first territory, with the exception of Alaska, was added for the purpose of settlement and statehood.

This new type of imperialism was the natural result of seeing other nations expand and the ushering in of the machine age. Production was so speeded up that there was a need for new markets and new sources of raw materials. Thus naval bases and financial and commercial expansion were the motives for the acquisition of Hawaii, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam, and for the establishment of protectorates over Nicaragua, Panama, Haiti, and Santo Domingo.

William Jennings Bryan was one of the first men to openly oppose imperialism. In his Memoirs we find this statement:

After I began to recruit a regiment, but before I was sworn in, I had occasion to make a speech at a dinner in Omaha, where the subject of imperialism was approached, and I then announced my opposition to colonialism, and so far as I know, I was the first public man to express myself on the subject.²

Although Bryan was in favor of the war with Spain to free an oppressed people from a tyrannical government, and to aid in the spread of democracy, he foresaw the temptation that would result, and he gave the following warning:

If a war undertaken for the sake of humanity degenerates into a war of conquest, we shall find it difficult to meet the charge of having added hypocrisy to greed.

²Bryan, Memoirs, p. 120.
Is our national character so weak that we cannot withstand the temptation to appropriate the first piece of land that comes within our reach?3

Fighting ceased toward the end of 1898, but it was obvious that the United States was embarking upon a colonial policy. According to the armistice terms, we were to receive the island of Puerto Rico, and, in the South Pacific, an island now known as Guam. Spain was to remove her armed forces and officials from Cuba and the United States would exercise military control over the island until some decision could be reached.

Before the Congress of the United States declared war on Spain in 1898, it recognized the independence of Cuba and adopted the Teller Resolution which promised to "leave the government and control of the island to its people." After peace was signed, however, troops were not removed until 1902. In his platform of 1900, Bryan demanded that we fulfill our pledge. In 1901, Senator Platt succeeded in getting a rider attached to the Army Appropriation Bill which became a part of the treaty between the United States and Cuba. The amendment provided that the Cuban government should never enter into any treaty with any foreign power that might impair her independence, that she would not assume any public debt which the ordinary revenues of the island

3 Long, op. cit., p. 128.
were unable to defray, that the United States might exercise the right to intervene for the preservation of Cuban independence, the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty, and for discharging the obligations with respect to Cuba imposed by the Treaty of Paris on the United States, and that Cuba lease or sell to the United States land sufficient for coaling or naval stations. In 1934, this amendment was abrogated and the United States no longer has the power of intervention.

At the close of the war Bryan saw that the Administration was not going to guarantee the independence of the Philippines and that the sentiment for imperialism was sweeping the country. He immediately resigned from the army and prepared to take up the fight against expansion.

The provision in the peace treaty to keep the Philippine Islands and pay $20,000,000 caused a storm of opposition from both Democratic and Republican groups. There was danger that the question would not be settled, so Bryan favored ratifying the treaty and promising the Philippines that their independence would be granted later. American sovereignty over Puerto Rico, he said, should be determined by a plebiscite. He urged the inclusion of the Bacon Amendment which declared that the United States had no intention of exercising permanent control over the islands, but this
was defeated. The treaty was ratified February 6, by a majority of 57 to 27. Sixteen Democrats and Populists were among the majority.

In Bryan's speech of acceptance of his nomination in 1900, he declared that if elected he would convene Congress in extraordinary session as soon as he was inaugurated and recommend an immediate declaration of the nation's purpose to establish a stable form of government in Cuba, give independence to the Filipinos, and to protect them from interference while they worked out their destiny.

His platform that year contained the following plank on expansion:

We are not opposed to territorial expansion when it takes in desirable territory which can be created into states in the Union, and whose people are willing and fit to become American citizens. We favor expansion by every peaceful and legitimate means. But we are unalterably opposed to seizing or purchasing distant islands to be governed outside the Constitution, and whose people can never become citizens.

We are in favor of extending the republic's influence among the nations, but believe that that influence should be extended not by force and violence, but through the persuasive power of a high and honorable example.4

And as for the Philippines, he declared:

We condemn and denounce the Philippine policy of the present administration. It has involved the republic in unnecessary war, sacrificed the lives of many of our noblest sons, and placed the United States previously known and applauded throughout the world

4Ieland Hamilton Jenks, Our Cuban Colony, p. 333.
as the champion of freedom, in the false and un-American position of crushing with military force and efforts of our former allies to achieve liberty and self-government. The Filipinos cannot be citizens without endangering our civilization; they cannot be subjects without imperiling our form of government; and as we are not willing to surrender our civilization nor to convert the republic into an empire, we favor an immediate declaration of the Nation's purpose to give the Filipinos, first, a stable form of government; second, independence; and third, protection from outside interference, such as has been given for nearly a century to the republics of Central and South America. 5

The colonial policy was by far the most important issue in this campaign. The acquisition of foreign territory was condemned as being contrary to American principles as expressed in the Declaration of Independence and as being likely to cause great expenditures and to involve the country in foreign entanglements.

Although Bryan was not a candidate for the Presidency in 1904, he said he wrote more of the platform than he did of his own in 1908. He had the following to say about imperialism and the Philippines:

Imperialism

We favor the preservation, so far as we can, of an open door for the world's commerce in the Orient, without an unnecessary entanglement in Oriental and European affairs, and without arbitrary, unlimited, irresponsible, and absolute government anywhere within our jurisdiction.

We oppose, as fervently as did George Washington himself, an indefinite, irresponsible, discretionary, and vague absolutism and a policy of colonial exploitation, no matter where or by whom invoked or exercised. We believe, with Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, that no government has a right to make one set of laws for those "at home" and another and a different set of laws, absolute in their character, for those "in the colonies." All men 5

under the American flag are entitled to the protection of the institutions whose emblem the flag is. If they are inherently unfit for those institutions, then they are inherently unfit to be members of the American body politic. Wherever there may exist a people incapable of being governed under American laws, in consonance with the American Constitution, the territory of that people ought not be part of the American domain.

Filipinos and Cubans

We insist that we ought to do for the Filipinos what we have done already for the Cubans, and it is our duty to make that promise now and upon suitable guarantees of protection to citizens of our own and other countries resident there at the time of our withdrawal, set the Filipino people upon their feet, free and independent to work out their own destiny.

The endeavor of the Secretary of War by pledging the Government's endorsement for "promoters" in the Philippine Islands to make the United States a partner in speculative legislation of the archipelago, which was only temporarily held up by the opposition of the Democratic Senators in the last session, will, if successful, lead to entanglements from which it will be difficult to escape.6

The Democratic platform in 1908 again condemned our experiment in imperialism and favored independence for the Philippines. The platform of 1912 contained a similar statement, and Bryan spoke for the principle for fifteen years. The issue found its way into every Democratic platform until it was granted in 1934.

The Jones Act, which was passed August 29, 1916, gave the Filipinos their first official declaration that the United States would grant them their independence as soon as they could maintain a stable government. Their commission and assembly was replaced by a Senate and House of Representatives, both elective. The Governor-General and vice-gov-

6Mckee, op. cit., p. 387.
error were to be appointed by the President and the Senate of the United States. The legislature could over-ride the veto of the Governor-General by a two-thirds vote of each house, control the franchise, and organize all executive departments except the Department of Interior and of Instruction.

The Hawes-Cutting Bill was an attempt in 1932 to grant the islands their independence. According to this act, a constitution was to be adopted that was acceptable to the Filipinos and to the Congress of the United States. This would serve as an instrument of government for a period of ten years, during which time the Islands were to be a protectorate of the United States. There was to be a High Commissioner in the Philippines and a Philippine Commissioner in the United States. Imports of sugar and cocoanut oil were placed on a quota basis, and American exports to the Island were to be duty free. Philippine immigrants to the United States were limited to fifty annually. This bill was vetoed by President Hoover.

The Tydings-McDuffie Act was passed in March, 1934 and approved by President Roosevelt. It provides for the independence of the Islands after a ten year Commonwealth under a Filipino executive. This act is very similar to the Hawes-Cutting Act, the only change being the surrender of the United States of its right to maintain military establishments in the Islands. The High Commissioner is the only American official.
left, and he has only the power of investigation and advice.

An act providing for the independence of the Philippines has at last been passed, and the principle that was once an ideal is now a reality.
CHAPTER V

PEACE POLICY

On March 4, 1913, while the world was in a state of turmoil, William Jennings Bryan became Secretary of State. For the first time in the history of our country we had in charge of one of the high offices a confirmed pacifist who was ready to put his convictions into practice. For twenty years he had held the attention of the nation through the power of his speech and of his pen. Many principles had he advocated, but none was dearer to him than the principle of international peace. This office gave him the opportunity to discuss his plans with world leaders.

Deeply religious, Bryan had from early youth dreamed of universal brotherhood as the goal of nations. He was convinced that wars were usually caused by special interests and that the burden fell upon the common people before the true facts were revealed. He believed that differences between nations could be settled peacefully if they were kept apart while the matter was calmly discussed, and their grievances were investigated. He reasoned that angry nations were like angry individuals and could be dealt with in a similar manner. He knew, however, that there was going to be a new arrangement between nations before his dream could
be realized, and he bent his efforts toward bringing about such an arrangement.

Bryan began making speeches and writing articles on peace in 1905, and this work occupied a great part of his time throughout the remainder of his life.

The plan formulated by the Great Commoner for the prevention of war is known as the "Thirty Peace Treaties." The principles of this plan first appeared in an editorial of his paper in 1905. It received the approval of the Inter-Parliamentary Union held in London in 1906, and of an international peace conference in New York in 1908.

On April 24, 1913, a few weeks after taking office, the new Secretary of State set about working on what he considered the greatest achievement of his life. He called a meeting in the reception room of the State Department of all the ambassadors and ministers and presented each one with a written outline of his plan which was a proposal for a series of international treaties. The Secretary explained that when nations were angry, it was difficult for either side to seek investigation; therefore, his plan called for a year's time to investigate and discuss all matters of controversy, and for a permanent international commission to which all such matters would be referred. Mr. Bryan gives the following description of the plan:

The proposed plan provided for the submission of all international disputes of every kind and character
to a permanent tribunal for investigation, when not by other treaties submitted for arbitration. (Our Arbitration Treaties contain four exceptions: viz., Questions of Honor, Questions of Independence, Vital Interest, and the Interests of Third Parties—the very questions that give rise to wars.) The proposed tribunal was to be chosen as follows: one by each country from among its own citizens, one by each country from another country, and the fifth by agreement between them.

Second, it provided for a year's time for investigation and report, during which time there should be no resort to hostilities.

Third, it reserved to each party the right of independence of action at the conclusion of the investigation.¹

This was not the first international effort toward the preservation of peace. A general arbitration agreement had been proposed at the first Hague Conference in 1899. The same issue was again brought before the Hague in 1907. The effort was blocked in both instances by the German delegates.

Mr. Bryan did not refer to past efforts but explained that the difficulty of treaties of arbitration lay in the fact that they left exceptions in regard to questions of honor, independence, vital interests, and the interest of the third parties.

"The nations have had machinery for war," said he; "they could go to war in a week, but strange to say, they have no machinery for the adjustment of disputes which defy diplomatic settlement. They are compelled to rely upon good offices or mediation with nothing to prevent acts of hostility before either can be offered. The Peace Treaty plan

¹Bryan, Memoirs, p. 335.
furnishes the machinery, and it can be invoked as soon as diplomacy fails."  

Bryan's idea was ridiculed by his critics, but it had the approval of the President and many other officials. The delegates received the plan with pleasure. Bernstorff was silent but later stated that Germany would accept it in principle but would not sign it. Salvador signed on August 7, 1913, and Brazil, Argentina, and Chile signed July 24, 1914. By the end of the year thirty nations had established treaties with the United States, and they have since been known as the Thirty Peace Treaties. The only important nations that did not sign were Japan, Austria, Hungary, Germany, and Belgium.

In the meantime war had broken out in Europe, and Bryan felt that the United States should propose an application of the principles of the treaties to the situation. The thirty nations that had signed represented three-fourths of the population of the civilized world, and although Germany had not participated, she had admitted that she endorsed the principle.

Within one month after the war had begun, Bryan sent the following letter to the President:

The European situation distresses me. The slaughter goes on and each day makes it more apparent that

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2Long, op. cit., p. 302.
it is to be a prolonged struggle. All parties to the
conflict declare that they did not want war, that they
are not responsible for it, and that they desire peace,
and to make their positions more nearly identical they
desire ensuring peace.

I cannot but feel that this nation, being the only
great nation on friendly terms with all, should urge
mediation, since none of the nations engaged are willing
to take the initiative. The responsibility for con-
tinuing the war is just as grave as the responsibility
for beginning it, and this responsibility, if pressed
upon the consideration of the belligerent nations, might
lead them to consent to mediation—no nation can afford
to refuse.

Would it not be worthwhile for you to address a
note to all the combatants reciting the awful horrors
of this conflict and pointing out --

First, that all deny responsibility for the war
and that all express a desire for peace;
Second, that responsibility for a continuance of
such a war is as undesirable as responsibility for be-
ginning it, and that such responsibility attaches to
this nation as well as to participants. My suggestion
is that you earnestly appeal to them to meet together
and exchange views as to the terms upon which permanent
peace can be insured.3

The Secretary of State decided to make a practical ap-
lication of the Thirty Treaties as a step toward securing
agreement among the nations, the plan being as follows:

This government to secure the cooperation of each
nation not actually at war in a plan by which it would
be represented upon an arbitrarily assembled commission
for mediation, with the understanding that such com-
mission, when organized would resolve:

First, that war is bad, inhuman, and uncivilized;
Second, that this war must stop, stop immediately;
independent of who is responsible for its beginning;
Third, that each nation now at war shall be re-
quested to submit its reasons for the same for the con-
sideration of the commission, and agree that hostilities
shall not be resumed for a period of one year or until
the commission shall have advised the terms under which
settlement should be made;

Fourth, that belligerent nations would not be obligated to accept as a finality the terms proposed by the commission, but in the event any nation should decline to accept them, the reasons for such refusal would be submitted for consideration by the commission before final rejection; and,

Fifth, that in case one party to the conflict should agree to the terms proposed and the other should decline such terms, then in that event, all nations represented by the commission would join in an economic and, if need be, an active military movement as allies of the agreeing power or powers.4

After a number of conferences between the President and the Secretary, the above proposals were prepared. The Secretary was then authorized to hand a copy to each of the representatives of nations then classed as neutral and non-belligerent. Later in the day, the President informed Bryan that he had changed his mind and wished to recall the papers. Thus ended one of the most unusual peace experiments that has ever been proposed.

Another neutrality policy of Bryan's was in regard to loans. Soon after the outbreak of the war in Europe, the Secretary addressed a letter to the President saying that Morgan Company of New York had asked whether there would be any objection to their making a loan to the French government and also the Rothschilds. He said:

I have conferred with Mr. Lansing and he knows of no legal objection to financing this loan, but I have suggested to him the advisability of presenting to you an aspect of the case which is not legal but I believe to be consistent with our attitude in international af-

4Rosser, op. cit., pp. 234-5.
fairs. It is whether it would be advisable for this Government to take the position that it will not approve of any loan to a belligerent nation. . . . 5

He gave as his reasons for this attitude that "money was the worst of all contrabands because it commands everything," and that our country would be divided into groups, each group sympathizing with the country to which it had loaned money. The President approved, and this was the first time a great nation ever took such a step during a war.

At the outbreak of the war, our government took the position that "the Citizens of the United States had a right to export anything to belligerents and that only arms, ammuntion, and implements of war were absolute contraband subject to seizure and confiscation on the high seas, unless such other articles and materials were shipped to or for the direct use of the military forces of a belligerent, or to a port occupied or blockaded by a belligerent." 6

Bryan contended, however, that our ships should not be permitted to carry ammunition to the countries at war. He also held that American passengers should not travel on ships carrying ammunition. After the sinking of the Lusitania, he sent the following note to the President: "A ship carrying contraband should not rely upon passengers to protect her

\[5\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 231.}\]

from attach— it would be like putting women and children in
front of an army . . . ."7

On June 10, 1915, he made the following statement:

Why should an American citizen be permitted to in-
volve his country in war by traveling upon a belligerent
ship when he knows that the ship will pass through a
danger zone? The question is not whether an American
citizen has a right under international law to travel
on a belligerent ship; the question is whether he ought
not, out of consideration for his country, if not for
his own safety, avoid danger when avoidance is possible.

It is a very one-sided citizenship that compels a
government to go to war over a citizen's rights, and
yet relieves the citizen of all obligations to consider
his nation's welfare. I do not know just how far the
President can go legally in actually preventing Ameri-
cans from travelling on belligerent ships, but I be-
lieve the Government should go as far as it can, and
that in case of doubt, it should give the benefit of
the doubt to the Government.

But even if the Government could not legally pre-
vent citizens from travelling on belligerent ships,
it could, and in my judgment should, earnestly advise
American citizens not to risk themselves or the peace
of their country, and I have no doubt that these warn-
ings would be heeded.8

Although most of Bryan's principles of peace received
little recognition at the time they were advocated, they
have all since found their ways into the policies of the
Democratic Party.

The principles of his Thirty Peace Treaties were em-
bedded in the Covenant of the League of Nations. Article
XII of this Covenant reads as follows:

The members of the League of Nations agree that if
there should arise between them any dispute likely to

7Long, op. cit., p. 335.
8Bryan, Memoirs, p. 411.
lead to a rupture, they will submit the matter either to arbitration or to inquiry by the Council, and they agree in no case to resort to war until three months after the award by the arbitrators or the report by the Council.

In any case, under this article, the award of the arbitrators shall be made within a reasonable time, and the report of the Council shall be made within six months after the submission of the dispute.9

Article XVI reads as follows:

Should a nation go to war without first resorting to arbitration or the World Court, all the other members, upon the authority of the Article, agree immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade or financial relations. Should the economic boycott fail, the Council may recommend to the member nations what armaments they are to contribute to punish the recalcitrant nation. Such decisions of the Council to require a unanimous vote, excluding interested parties.10

Bryan favored the Covenant and urged its ratification. The Senate was divided into four groups: the Democrats who would ratify without reservations, the Democrats who would ratify with certain reservations, the Republicans who would ratify with drastic changes, and the Republicans who would not ratify under any condition. Bryan spoke in Washington at a Jackson Day dinner on January 8, 1920, for a prompt ratification of the Treaty and the adoption of the League. "I was willing," he said, "to ratify the League as it came to us though I did not like Article X. It is clear that all must be lost unless we accept reservations ...."11

9Ibid., p. 594.
10Ibid.
Although the United States has never entered the League, she has always cooperated with it.

Since the Democrats came into control in 1933, there have been a series of neutrality laws passed that remind us of the principles advocated by Bryan. The first of these acts was the Neutrality Act of 1935, which was to expire February 29, 1936. Under this act it was to become unlawful, upon the proclamation of the President that a state of war existed, to export arms and munitions to the belligerent states. Citizens were to be warned by the President not to travel upon belligerent ships, save at their own risk. This measure was the first of its kind to be passed by the United States, but it is the same principle so earnestly urged by Bryan.

The Neutrality Act was renewed February 29, 1936. Loans and credits to warring nations became unlawful, although the President might allow credits for lawful exports and might permit renewal of existing debts. Thus, another policy advocated by Bryan has become a law of our land.

This same principle was continued in the Neutrality Act of 1939 which contains the following provision:

It is unlawful for any person to export from the United States to any other state any arms, ammunition, or implements of war as proclaimed by the President without first obtaining a license from the Secretary of State, and no person in the United States can sell
arms, ammunition, or implements of war to any person in a belligerent state on credit, and title must be transferred before export.\textsuperscript{13}

Thus, we see that the neutrality principles of Bryan have been embodied in the program of the present administration. His theory that Americans should not insist upon traveling in war zones, that our ships should not be permitted to carry ammunition to countries at war, and that loans should not be made to belligerent nations have all received the endorsement of the Government. He was opposed to the "big stick" policy of Theodore Roosevelt, and we now have the "good neighbor" policy instead. The Pan-American Union with its promise of American solidarity offers the greatest hope of peace that the United States has ever enjoyed. While it is true that all the principles advocated by Bryan were not original, he was the first statesman to try to put his pacifist theories into political action. In the words of one historian: "As a popularizer of the ideal of international peace and human brotherhood, he was indeed the peerless leader."\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{13}The Americana, 1940, p. 571.

\textsuperscript{14}James Fred Rippy, America and the Strife of Europe, p. 191.
CHAPTER VI

LABOR

The activities of labor unions have until recent years been hampered by the common law doctrine of conspiracy. According to this doctrine, acts which are lawful when committed by individuals may be unlawful when committed by groups. The theory is based upon the principle that the concerted action of an organized group may affect society more than the same act committed individually by the members of the organization.

According to the legal definition, a conspiracy is "A combination between two or more persons, to commit any act punishable by law or to effect a legal purpose by criminal or unlawful means." A combination is illegal, therefore, only when its purposes or methods are criminal; it is legal if its primary aim is to benefit itself, and it is illegal if its primary aim is to injure some one else. Thus, the courts have frequently been called upon to decide whether the primary aim of a strike or a boycott of an organized group was injurious to the employer or of benefit to the union. The decisions of the courts have retarded the progress of the labor unions to a great extent since their decisions were so often rendered in favor of the employers. In a
Mayor's Court in Philadelphia, the common law doctrine of conspiracy was applied for the first time in the United States. Journeymen shoemakers had been charged with a collective attempt to raise wages and the judge ruled that a combination of employees to raise their wages was a criminal conspiracy. This set a precedent that was followed until 1842 when a decision was rendered by the state Supreme Court of Massachusetts that was a great contribution toward establishing the rights of labor unions. In this case of the Commonwealth versus Hunt, the Chief Justice declared that there was nothing illegal in a combination which strikes to maintain a closed union shop.

From this time until after the Civil War the labor unions developed with little hindrance from the courts. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, they began to meet heated opposition again. They were accused of being responsible for secret organizations which had practiced acts of violence in the mining districts. Such episodes as the Railway Strike of 1877 and the Pullman Strike of 1894 caused increased hostility toward organized labor. A new remedy was employed to curb the activities of the unions. This new device was the use of the injunction and was a much greater enemy to labor than the conspiracy suit.

This was a time when the country was rapidly coming under the control of big business, and labor was receiving little consideration from the government. The Democrats of
1868, 1888, and 1892 had briefly referred to the matter in their platforms, but in 1896 they began to make definite demands. The same spirit that led William Jennings Bryan to advocate free silver also led him to urge better working conditions for the laborers. In his "Cross of Gold" speech of 1896, he gave his broad interpretation of the business man by saying that the wage earner was as much a business man as his employer and the miner as much a business man as the financial magnates who corner the money of the world.

This was the beginning of his fight against the tyranny to which the laborers were being subjected. He was one of the first political leaders to advocate the establishment of a separate department of labor with a representative in the Cabinet. He opposed government by injunction on the ground that it was an attempt on the part of the judges to invade the field of politics and that it was a suspension of the constitutional right of trial by jury. For all these things he was willing to fight and they have been advocated in practically every Democratic platform since 1896.

The first year Bryan ran for President his platform contained the following declaration in regard to labor:

"We denounce arbitrary interference by federal authorities in local affairs as a violation of the Constitution of the United States and as a crime against free institutions, and we especially object to government by injunctions as a new and highly dangerous form of oppression by which federal judges, in contempt of the laws of the states and rights of citizens, become at once legislators,"
judges, and executioners; and we approve the bill passed at the last session of the United States Senate and now pending in the House of Representatives, relative to contempt in federal courts, and providing for trials by jury in certain cases of contempt.¹

It also favored "the passage of such laws that may protect labor in all its rights," and "arbitration of differences between employers engaged in interstate commerce and their employees," and recommended such "legislation as is necessary to carry out this principle."

Bryan's platform of 1900 contained a plank that opposed government by injunction, denounced the blacklist, and favored arbitration as a means of settling disputes between corporations and their employees. It also recommended the creation of a department of labor in charge of a secretary with a seat in the Cabinet.

Since Bryan had an important part in the construction of the platform of 1904, he succeeded in getting a labor plank included that declared:

> We favor enactment and administration of laws giving labor and capital impartially their just rights. Capital and labor ought not to be enemies. Each is necessary to the other. Each has its rights, but the rights of labor are certainly no less "vested," no less "sacred," and no less unalienable than the rights of capital.²

In his campaign of 1908, Bryan again took up his fight against injunction. He also declared that the Democratic

¹McKee, op. cit., p. 296.
²Ibid., p. 385.
Party was in favor of giving the laborers the right to organize "to the extent that such organizations and their members should not be regarded as illegal combinations in restraint of trade."

He pledged the Democratic Party to the enactment of a law "for a general employer's liability act, covering injury to body or loss of life to the employees." He further promised the enactment of a law creating a department of labor with a Secretary in the President's Cabinet. The platform of 1912, which Bryan helped to construct, contained labor platforms very similar to the one of 1908. The following year the Democrats came into control of the House of Representatives, and in May a bill was passed providing for a Department of Labor with a representative in the President's Cabinet. Bryan had been advocating this reform since 1900.

Another measure that he had been urging was passed in September, 1916. This was an employees compensation law providing adequate indemnity for injury of body or loss of life to employees.

Bryan probably never took a stand that brought a greater storm of protest than the one he took in regard to injunctions. He was called an enemy of law and order by members of both parties, but he continued to fight this abuse and lived to see the passage of a law guaranteeing the right of trial by jury in cases of alleged contempt outside the presence of the court.
Bryan believed that labor should have the right to organize, and the principle has found its way into practically every Democratic platform of the twentieth century until the right was firmly established. One of the greatest obstacles to organization was the passage of the Sherman Anti-Trust Law which provided that "every contract, combination in the form of trust or otherwise, or conspiracy in restraint of trade or commerce among the several states or with foreign nations is hereby declared to be illegal."

Section Seven of the Act contains the following provision: "Any person who shall be injured in his business or property by any other person or corporation declared to be unlawful by this Act may sue therefor ... and shall recover threefold damages by him sustained, and the costs of libel suit, including a reasonable attorney's fee."

Labor became alarmed in 1908 when, in the Danbury Hatters' Case, the Court ruled that the Act applied to "combinations composed of laborers acting in the interest of laborers." The unions immediately began working for immunity from the Sherman Anti-Trust Law. One of the first recommendations of President Wilson was legislation clearly defining the rights of labor under existing laws. Finally, in 1914, Congress passed the Clayton Anti-Trust Act which declared:

That the labor of a human being is not a commodity or article of commerce. Nothing contained in the anti-trust laws shall be construed to forbid the exis-
tence and operation of labor, agricultural, or horti-
cultural organizations, instituted for the purposes
of mutual help, and not having capital stock or con-
duced for profit, or to forbid or restrain individual
members of such organizations from lawfully carrying
the legitimate objects thereof; nor shall such organi-
zations, or the members thereof be held or construed
to be illegal combinations or conspiracies in restraint
of trade, under the anti-trust laws.\(^3\)

The workingmen were pleased with this legislation, but
it was soon apparent that very little had been gained. The
Act had stated that labor groups could not be prohibited
from lawfully carrying out their legitimate objects, but it
failed to specify what would constitute "lawful" acts and
"legitimate" objects. Abuses continued to exist and every
Democratic platform demanded exemption from the anti-trust
laws until, in 1932, the Norris-LaGuardia Act was passed
wherein the acts of labor which may be considered as lawful
restraints of trade are clearly defined. The legal right
of labor to organize was made more effective when the Na-
tional Labor Relations Act was passed in 1935. Section
Four of this Act states that "Employers shall have the
right to self organization, to form, join or assist labor
organizations, to bargain collectively through representa-
tives of their own choosing, and to engage in concerted ac-
tivities for the purpose of concerted bargaining or other
mutual protection."\(^4\)

\(^3\)Henry Steele Commager, *Documents of American History*,
p. 290.

\(^4\)Edwin A. Elliot, *Some Aspects of the Work of the Na-
tional Labor Relations Board*, p. 2.
To guard against unfair practices of employers, a National Labor Relations Board was created. It was empowered to stop any of an enumerated list of unfair practices on the part of the employer and could ask any Federal Court of Appeals to enforce its orders.

Although the Democratic platform of 1936 made no new recommendations, it gave the following summary of what the Administration had done for labor during the preceding term:

We have given the army of America's industrial workers something more substantial than the Republicans' dinner pail full of promises; we have increased the worker's pay and shortened his hours; we have undertaken to put an end to the sweated labor of his wife and children; we have written into the law of the land his right to collective bargaining and self-organization free from the interference of the employers; we have provided Federal machinery for the peaceful settlement of labor disputes. We will continue to protect the worker and we will guard his rights, both as wage earner and consumer, in the production and consumption of all commodities including coal and water power and other natural resource products.

The worker has been returned to the road of freedom and prosperity. We will keep him on that road.\(^5\)

An analysis of that plank will show that the measures mentioned were policies advocated by Bryan in his platforms, speeches, and writings. All of his most cherished labor principles have been adopted by the Democratic Party and have ultimately been incorporated in our Constitution and statute books.

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CHAPTER VII

OTHER POLICIES

Besides currency, labor, prohibition, imperialism, and peace, there were several other issues that received the wholehearted support of Bryan. He was among the first to advocate some of these principles. Other principles, however, had been receiving some attention for many years. But whether the question was new or old, the opposing side always knew it had a powerful enemy when William Jennings Bryan entered the field of battle. Invariably he appealed to his party as an agency for the promulgation of the reforms in which he was interested, and when he began working for a reform, he would not cease until it had been written into our statute books.

One of the problems over which Bryan was gravely concerned was government regulation of railroads. The first important step in that direction was the creation of the Interstate Commerce Commission, consisting of five members. Encouragement of competition among the railroads and discouragement of discrimination was the main purpose of the body.

Bryan, however, was dissatisfied with this act, since he did not think it was as forceful and far-reaching as it should be. Accordingly, he began, in 1896, working for more effec-
tive government regulation; but it was nearly ten years be-
fore he began to see any results. Every Democratic platform
from 1896 to 1908 contained a plank demanding more power for
the Commission. The plank of 1900 favored an "enlargement
of the scope of the Interstate Commerce Commission to pro-
tect the individual and communities from discrimination and
the public from unjust and unfair transportation rates."

In 1904 the platform, in the construction of which
Bryan had a great deal of influence, contained a plank de-
manding "an enlargement of the powers of the Interstate Com-
merce Commission to the end that the traveling public and
shippers of this country may have prompt and adequate relief
from the abuses to which they are subjected in the matter
of transportation."

In the meantime, Roosevelt was also getting interested
in regulation, as shown by statements of Mrs. Bryan:

After ten years of constant effort by Mr. Bryan to
secure more effective railroad regulation based on the
Democratic platforms of 1896, 1900, and 1904, President
Roosevelt, to the consternation of his Republican as-
sociates, took up the cause, and, with the support of
the Democrats in Congress, accomplished the reform.

While the Democrats under Mr. Bryan's leadership
had been demanding this measure of relief, the Repub-
licans had been fighting it, but they were at last com-
pelled to surrender to public opinion.

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1McKee, op. cit., p. 335.

2Ibid., p. 389.

3Bryan, Memoirs, p. 469.
At any rate, the Elkins Act, which seemed to be an answer to the Democratic platform of 1900, was passed February 10, 1903; also, the Hepburn Act, which seemed to be an answer to the Democratic platform of 1904 was passed in 1906.

The Elkins Act made it unlawful to give any rebates from the published rate, and the penalty was set at not less than a thousand dollars nor more than twenty-thousand dollars for each offense.

When the Hepburn Act was passed in 1906, the power of the Interstate Commerce Commission was extended to pipe lines, terminals, sleeping cars, express companies, and all parts of the railroad system. The Commission was authorized to set maximum charges and to prescribe uniform methods of bookkeeping. It also stipulated that any changes in rates must be published thirty days before going into effect.

Another abuse of the railroads that caused a great deal of protest was the "long and short hauls." The companies often made a practice of charging a higher rate on short hauls where no competition existed than on long hauls where several companies might be competing for the business. An example of this practice is seen in the following: Walter F. Martin, a prominent farmer of Mountainair, New Mexico, was talking to his sister visiting him from a town near Dallas, Texas, and he said, "Our fruits and nuts, such as, oranges and lemons, and English walnuts, are higher than yours are. One reason is that the rates are cheaper from
California to Texas than they are from California to New Mexico, although in being shipped to Texas, they pass right through our town here."

Bryan joined the other Westerners in their demand for some measure of relief from this type of discrimination. In 1910 he was still pleading for an enlargement of the powers of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and in that year this was granted by the passage of the Mann-Elkins Act of 1910 under which the Commission was authorized to change rates and to suspend proposed rates pending an investigation. The troublesome clause in the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887, "under substantially similar circumstances" was eliminated, and carriers were prohibited from charging lower rates for longer than for shorter hauls without first obtaining the consent of the Commission.

All these things had been advocated by Bryan, and although we cannot say he was wholly responsible for them, we must admit that his unquestioned influence upon the masses of people must have had some part in swaying public opinion for the legislation that was passed and continued to be passed as the years went by.

The power of the Interstate Commerce Commission was again broadened in 1920 with the passage of the Esch-Cummins Act. It was then authorized to fix the minimum or absolute rates that railroads may charge, and it was also given the
authority to determine the maximum railroad rates that may be charged on intra-state traffic.

An act that was signed June 19, 1924, put systems of communication by telephone, telegraph, cable, and radio under Federal regulation. The Government now regulates all forms of railroad transportation as well as all types of electrical communication.

One of the principal differences between the Democratic and the Republican Parties had, until recent years, been the tariff issue, the Republicans favoring protection and the Democrats favoring a tariff for revenue only.

Bryan, as might be expected, opposed the protective tariff with all his might, and, through his tireless efforts, kept the fires of protest burning in the Democratic Party. So non-sectional were his demands, and so logical was his reasoning, that those who heard him could not help being impressed. The first speech he made in Congress, March 16, 1892, was on the subject of the tariff. Long gives the following description of the occasion.

The attendance was small as he started in but the word soon spread around that the tall, dark, dynamic young man from Nebraska was making a talk worth hearing. As his colleagues listened to him, they had something of the same mingled surprise and pride of the State Convention which nominated him. They felt that this was not simply an initial address but the words of a young man who had a certain fire, decisiveness, and belief in the message he was proclaiming. The tariff was an old subject, but Bryan made it bite.4

4Long, op. cit., p. 55.
He had been speaking but a short time when one of his opponents, seeking to embarrass him, inquired of the young Congressman: "Are you to be understood as opposed to a state or national protection to be extended to the beet sugar industry?"

The sugar beet growers of Nebraska had been asking for a bounty, but Bryan replied: "I am, most assuredly, and when it is necessary to come down to Congress and ask for a protection or a bounty for an industry in my own state which I should refuse as wrong to an industry in another state, I shall cease to represent Nebraska in Congress." 5

We cannot wonder that a man with that courage would be admired not only the Democrats of his own state, but of the nation as a whole.

In another part of that same speech, while attempting to prove that the tariff was higher than was needed for revenue, he brought out the following startling point:

...It is estimated that on an average for every dollar brought into the Treasury by import duties, $4 go into the pockets of protected manufacturers. What does that mean. It means that 80 per cent of the taxes paid by the people for the support of the general Government because of import duties goes to the protected interests and only 20 per cent goes into the public Treasury, 80 per cent being absorbed in collecting taxes. 6

It is said that whereas there were only a few present when this speech began, the vacant desks were filled before

5Ibid., p. 56.

6Bryan, Speeches, p. 21.
he had finished. The next morning the press rated him as being the best tariff speaker in ten years.

In his second Congressional campaign of 1894, Mr. Bryan presented the tariff question in such manner that any school child could understand. The winter before, while in Old Mexico, he had visited the hardware stores of Mexico City. There he found cutlery selling for much less than it was sold for in the United States. To Bryan this was ample proof of what the tariff was doing. The manufacturer was able to charge the consumer a high price for his articles and put the surplus on a foreign market at a twenty-five to fifty percent reduction and still make a profit. Bryan bought several of these articles and produced them at his next debate. It seems that the effect upon the audience was all that he had desired.

In Bryan's platform of 1896 and 1900 he contended for a tariff for revenue only. In 1904, while serving on the committee that formed the platform for the Presidential campaign, he had quite a debate with some of the other members over this question. In his Memoirs he made the following statement about the contest:

The original proposition was strongly protective, at least it gave very little encouragement to the tariff reformer. . . . During the course of the discussion I had somewhat spirited debates with several members of the committee . . . .

7Bryan, Memoirs, p. 151.
When the platform was finally finished, it contained a plank that favored "a tariff limited to the needs of the Government economically administered, and so levied as not to discriminate against any industry, class, or section, to the end that the burden of taxation shall be distributed as equally as possible."8

When Bryan ran for President again in 1908, his platform demanded that the tariff be restored to a revenue basis, and he spoke forcefully for the reform. In 1912, he took an active part in formulating the policies of the party and he again took a stand against protection.

Congress was completely controlled by the Democrats from 1913 to 1915, and President Wilson immediately called a special session to consider the tariff question. The result was the Underwood Tariff Bill which became a law October 3, 1913. One of the most important changes was in the iron and steel schedules where the raw and half-manufactured materials were placed on the free list and there was a reduction in the finished product. Free wool and gradual reduction on sugar were other changes.

In recent years the tariff has not been as great an issue between the two parties as formerly. The platform of 1928 called for duties that will permit effective competition, insure against monopoly, and at the same time produce a fair revenue. It called for a competitive tariff for revenue and

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8McKee, op. cit., p. 338.
reciprocal trade agreements with other nations. In 1936, there was no plank on the subject.

The Democratic Congress of 1934 passed a reciprocal Tariff Act which authorized the President, without asking the consent of Congress, to lower duties on articles as much as fifty per cent. Thus another policy advocated by Bryan has found its way into our statute books.

It is probably safe to say that Bryan was never more interested in any cause than he was in the one for woman suffrage. He was one of the few in the early part of the twentieth century who believed that women should have equal political privileges with men. Not only did he feel that women should not be discriminated against, but he thought that women as a whole would support the moral side of a question and the country would be benefitted by their votes.

In 1914, when woman suffrage was a local issue in Nebraska, Bryan canvassed the state in an effort to get the amendment passed. An August issue of the Literary Digest that year gave the following views of the different newspapers as to the influence that he would have on the movement.

Before the voice of the Secretary of State was raised in support of the equal suffrage amendment in Nebraska, suffragists had received little comfort from the Administration. Now say all except those who cannot see Mr. Bryan as anything but a burden for any cause he favors, they should take heart. For the Secretary's announcement, believes the New York World (Dem.) "will be worth many thousand votes in Nebraska; the Washington Star (Ind.) believes it will have a notable effect in the adjoining state of Missouri, where an amendment is
also to be voted on in November; and in the Nashville
Tennessean's (Dem.) opinion it means that "we will have
votes for women in all the States sooner than would have
been the case without his help." True, nobody looks up
on it as so great a suffrage triumph as the conversion of
the President would be, nor, observes the Springfield Re-
publican (Ind.), can Mr. Bryan personally commit the Ad-
ministration, but it adds, "aside from the President, he
is far and away the greatest political figure in it."

When woman suffrage became a national issue, Mr. Bryan
took his stand in its favor. In 1916 he spoke to the Legis-
latures of Ohio and Indiana, and both of those states after-
wards granted Presidential suffrage to women. At a banquet
in Washington in 1916 he delivered his famous mother argu-
ment which, due to its sentimental appeal, must have impress-
ed many who heard and read it.

The strongest argument in favor of woman suffrage
is the mother argument. I love my children--as much,
I think, as a father can; but I am not in the same class
with my wife. I do not put any father in the same class
with the mother in love for the child. If you would
know why the mother's love for a child is the sweetest,
tenderest, most lasting thing in the world, you will find
the explanation in the Bible: "Where your treasure is,
there will your heart be also."

The child is the treasure of the mother; she in-
vests her life in her child. When the mother of the
Gracchi was asked: "Where are your jewels?" she point-
ed to her sons. The mother's life trembles in the balance
at the child's birth, and for years it is the object of
constant care. She expends upon it her nervous force
and energy; she endows it with the wealth of her love.
She dreams of what it is to do and be--and, 0, if a
mother's dreams only came true, what a different world
this would be! The most pathetic struggle that this
earth knows is not the struggle between armed men upon
the battlefield; it is the struggle of a mother to save
her child when wicked men set traps for it and lay snares

9Topics of the Day, "Mr. Bryan out for Woman Suffrage,"
Literary Digest, Vol. 49 (August 1, 1914), p. 175.
for it. And as long as the ballot is given to those who conspire to rob the home of a child it is not fair—no one can believe it fair—to tie a mother's hands while she is trying to protect her home and save her child. If there is such a thing as justice, surely a mother has a just claim to a voice in shaping the environment that may determine whether her child will realize her hopes or bring her gray hairs in sorrow to the grave.

Because God has planted in every human heart a sense of justice, and because the mother argument makes an irresistible appeal to this universal sense, it will finally batter down all opposition and open woman's pathway to the polls. 10

Finally in 1919, Congress succeeded in adopting a Constitutional amendment for woman's suffrage, and Bryan set about at once to urging its ratification by making speeches throughout the country and writing articles in the Commoner. By March, 1920, thirty states had ratified the amendment.

One of the first to advocate popular election of senators was William Jennings Bryan. When he ran for Congress the first time, his platform contained a plank favoring this reform, and he had it included in every national Democratic platform from 1900 to 1912. He spoke for this measure for twenty years, and so popular did the idea become that by 1912, both parties were favoring it. This amendment went into effect in 1913.

Another cause for which Bryan was one of the pioneers was the income tax. While a member of Congress, he served on a sub-committee which prepared a revenue bill with an income tax clause. This was opposed by President Cleveland and Secretary Carlisle. Bryan, therefore, circulated a pe-

10 Bryan, Memoirs, p. 506.
tition for a Democratic caucus and secured the passage of
a resolution making the income tax a part of the revenue bill.
The bill became a law without the President's signature, but
was later declared unconstitutional. In his Congressional
speech for the bill, Bryan said:

If any Democrat who has advocated tariff reform and
denounced the present law is willing to go back to his
people and say: "Yes, the McKinley tariff is a crime; its
loads are heavy and its oppression great, but I choose
to make you bear the injustice still, rather than bring
you a relief accompanied by a light tax upon incomes,"
he can settle the matter with those whom he represents.
If there be those who are willing to see their fellows
oppressed "with burdens grievous to be borne" and yet
"touch not the burdens" lest wealth may be displeased,
the rest of us can still carry on the work of tariff
reform, even if in so doing, we must impose a tax which
embodies the just principle observed by Him who "tem-
pers the wind to the shorn lamb."ll

For twenty years Bryan continued to plead for a national
income tax and, through his speeches and writings, helped
to build up a public sentiment strong enough to get such an
amendment passed just before he became Secretary of State.

The first time Bryan was nominated for President, he sent
the following message to the newspapers: "In order that I
shall have no other ambition except to serve my country, I
now declare if I am elected to the Presidency of the United
States, I will not seek, nor will I under any circumstances
accept a second nomination."

This single term principle found its way into the Demo-
ocratic platform of 1912, but due to international conditions,

llBryan, Speeches, p. 176.
the plank was disregarded in 1916. One still often hears a
Democrat say he thinks a president should serve only one term.

Bryan advocated publicity of campaign expenditures, and
we now have such a law on our statute books.

He was one of the first national leaders to declare him-
self in favor of the initiative and referendum. Although he
received a great deal of criticism for his stand, he lived to
see nearly half the states in the Union adopt this form of
what he termed more representative government.

The Democrats had been protesting against the trusts for
many years, and Bryan joined them in their demands for en-
forcement of the laws that already existed and the enactment
of such additional legislation as was necessary to prevent
private monopoly. During Wilson's administration the Clay-
ton Anti-Trust Act was passed which, among other things, made
the formation of interlocking directorates and holding com-
panies illegal.
CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

On July 26, 1925, William Jennings Bryan quietly passed away. At that time, while the Nation was enjoying a period of post-war prosperity, Bryan's influence had declined until only a few enthusiastic followers remained. While most of the things for which he had worked so hard had become an established part of our government, others, such as free silver and independence of the Philippines, were no longer seriously considered by many people. In recent years, however, Bryan's policies have been revived, and his influence is again being recognized.

On May 3, 1934, at the dedication of a monument to the Great Commoner, President Roosevelt declared that Bryan "had kept alive many of the ancient faiths on which we are building today." 1

As to Bryan's influence on the policies of Wilson, Ray Stannard Page, with access to all the correspondence of the World War President, came to this conclusion:

One of the most surprising features of these developments is the way in which Bryan looms up as the statesman of largest calibre among Wilson's advisers. His views were not only the broadest and most constructive, but

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most in accord with the President's own conception of America's role in the world. We find Bryan suggesting many of the things that Wilson was to say and do after two years of futile negotiation by House.2

Another writer made the following statement concerning the position held by Bryan:

For thirty years he strode the American stage compelling attention. Always he was news, first page news. Whenever his name appeared, one-third of the Nation said, "He is a menace." Another third cried, "He is a prophet," and the remainder shouted, "Here is a good show." Denounced, vilified, championed, ridiculed, whatever his lot at the moment, he held unabashed the center of the scene. Only Roosevelt and Wilson approached his place in the public spotlight—and at times eclipsed it. But his star rose before theirs, and he was still a luminary when they had passed beyond.3

Bryan's influence can be partly attributed to his oratorical ability. No one ever commanded larger crowds than he did, and his voice could be heard all over the auditorium. Although he had a flow of words that has never been surpassed, he always used the simplest words possible to convey his meaning. His illustrations were taken from the commonplace experiences that were easily understood by all. He was particularly noted for his scriptural quotations and use of Biblical incidents in his speeches.

Not only did he speak the language of the common people, but he mingled with them. He was always ready with a genial smile and hearty handclasp for the lowliest person that ap-

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3Long, op. cit., p. 5.
proached him. Truly he was one who "could walk with kings nor lose the common touch."

Mr. Bryan was more than an orator and politician. He was a champion of the rights of the common man and endeavored to put his theories into practice.

He advocated and worked tirelessly for four of the amendments that have been added to our Constitution—popular election of Senators, income tax, woman suffrage, and prohibition. He was the author of the law compelling publicity of campaign expenditures. He advocated that a department of labor be created with a Secretary in the President's Cabinet, and he lived to see that come to pass. He constantly pleaded for the independence of the Philippine Islands and that has been granted by the present Democratic Administration. He fought government by injunction until it was abolished. He favored regulation of railroads and increased power of the Interstate Commerce Commission. Railroads are now regulated, and the powers of the Commission have continued to increase. To him belongs a great deal of credit for the Federal Reserve Act that was passed during Wilson's Administration. He urged the investigation of all international disputes before hostilities could begin, and the principle was embodied in treaties with thirty nations and later in the Covenant of the League of Nations. The Neutrality Act of 1937 is still another principle of Bryan, applied to the present situation.
In summing up the life work of Bryan, Rosser made the following statement:

Let no admiring friend regret for him the failure of the American people to elect Mr. Bryan President. He was more interested in the promotion of ideals and the success of the principles he advocated, than in personal preferment. Let his enemies not take comfort until they can point to his defeat in these endeavors.

The prime apostle and peerless defender of modern progressive political principles and of economic and moral reforms in government, he lived to see more for which he fought firmly fixed in the public conscience and written into the laws of this land than was witnessed by any other statesman of this generation. 4

4 Rosser, op cit., p. 321.
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