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W. J. Bryan.

Mr. Creelman has known Mr. Bryan for years and entertains opposite opinions on the silver question.—Ed. From the New York Journal.

Mr. Bryan is one of the least impulsive men in America. The common idea of him is that he is governed in all things by his emotions. Nothing could be further from the truth. His habit of mind is orderly and deliberate, and he is usually desperately slow in making decisions. Of all the leaders of the democratic party as it exists today he is, perhaps, more laborious and careful, more studious and more suspicious of issues that originate in popular clamor than any other.

This statement may surprise men who look upon Mr. Bryan as a mere passionate orator. But it is the simple truth. His political passions are passions of what he conceives to be principles. This is the key to the Bryan of today. He is conservative rather than radical, fundamental rather than practical.

Since his nomination in 1896 Mr. Bryan has grown graver, broader, deeper. He has lost what there was in him of sectional feeling, and looks to the swarming East to help the South and West in its struggle against the abuses of corporate wealth in politics. He is more national in his point of view. Today he seems to understand that a man may disagree with him on the currency question and yet be a sincere democrat, accepting the party creed as a whole.

Although I have not been a supporter of Mr. Bryan, I am convinced by personal contact with him and by my knowledge of what he has accomplished and is accomplishing now that three years have changed him from a sectional leader inspired but enthralled by a single idea into a man of broad, responsible statesman. His patient tact, his courageous devotion to principle and his power of compelling confidence in his honesty are gradually reuniting the democratic party.

Let no one be deluded by the idea that Mr. Bryan does not understand party politics in all its ramifications. I should say that he is at this moment the most astute politician in the United States. Think of the extraordinary ability and knowledge required to hold in union the democratic, populist, and free silver republican parties; think of a defeated candidate who can for three years, without power or place, hold the attention of the entire nation, speak boldly and without reserve on every public issue in a line of constant and heroic excitement, and yet not make a single political blunder; in these three

years he has become more moderate in speech and less rhetorical. He is reasonable rather than dictatorial.

I speak of him as a profound and masterful politician, because that is the side of his character not generally understood. Neither Senator Hanna, President McKinley, David B. Hill, Arthur P. Gorman nor Richard Croker is in the same grade with him as a party politician. He seems to rule without threats, without promises and without money. He is building up an organization that will compare in completeness with any that has existed since the civil war. He is determined that his party shall not go into the next campaign in a floundering condition. If Mr. Bryan has a serious fault as a politician it is his inability to yield or seem to yield.

His personality is something phenomenal. He dominates everything about him. In this respect he unfortunately resembles Mr. Cleveland, but, unlike Cleveland, he trusts the common sense of the common people. Mr. Bryan's deep religious convictions control him in his attitude toward the masses. He firmly believes that the hand of God is always present in the affairs of men, and that it is a part of the divine plan to work out every good thing through the average mind; in other words, through the majority.

No unprejudiced man can travel through the various states today without recognizing the fact that Mr. Bryan is much stronger and much more firmly entrenched in the confidence of the multitude than he was at any time during the last presidential campaign. He is the supreme, unchallenged leader of his party. But what has most impressed me is the large and constantly increasing following he has among business men now.

His refusal to engage in any personal attacks on the president, his decent and dignified manner of speech and his opposition to a national policy of foreign adventure seems to have broken down the prevailing distrust among legitimate business men. The truth is that Mr. Bryan is today the great barrier against state socialism in America. Were it not for his unceasing labors, his open and real sympathy for the millions who suffer in the shadow of remorseless corporate greed, and his power of convincing the desperate and despairing that their cause can be won without overturning the present order of government, state socialism would be kindled into life.

Hundreds of thousands of men who look with kind eyes upon government confiscation of trusts as a relief for the present top-heavy, unequal condition

of the nation have been drawn into support of the democratic party through their belief in Mr. Bryan's sincerity. He bridges a great gulf. So long as the original conditions, tendencies, and opportunities of the republic existed there were no signs of socialism to be seen. Mr. Bryan's rise into national power is the least protest of old-fashioned continental Americanism against the new order of things represented by McKinleyism, trusts and imperialism.

Much as I personally dislike and distrust the free silver idea, I am compelled by force of facts to recognize in Mr. Bryan a really great man, a stubborn and uncompromising champion of a mistaken financial policy, but a statesman and a patriot who loves and believes in the plain people. Much has been written and said about Mr. Bryan's failure to make a national name and a great fortune as a lawyer, but it must be remembered that he was only twenty-three years old when he was admitted to the bar in a small Illinois town, and that he gave up the practice of law seven years later and entered upon a political career—yet twice during that period he made himself self-supporting, once in Jackson and again after his removal to Lincoln. Besides that he declined to accept a salary of ten thousand dollars a year from the Standard Oil Company, preferring to live more economically and fight against the abuses of such overgrown corporations.

He has a much more solid record as a lawyer and business man than President McKinley. For one thing, no man has ever been called upon to pay his debts, and I personally know that he has helped many an unfortunate friend out of his troubles.

Another fact about Mr. Bryan has become known since 1896—he cannot be used by other men—he is not weak or invertebrate. He is the master rather than the servant of those who surround him. It was said in the last campaign that if this unformed, inexperienced youth from the prairies of Nebraska should be seated in the White House his every act would be dictated by cranks and fanatics. But today the whole nation can witness in every part of the country the evidence of this man's indomitable will and unconquerable courage.

I am quite sure that if the next democratic national platform should fail to meet his convictions he would decline to be the democratic candidate, although he would vote the democratic ticket.

My own judgment is that he will have no rival in the national convention, and will be dominated by acclamation.

It is too soon to express a positive opinion regarding his chances of election. But I should say that he is much more popular than when he was last candidate, and that if the contest is to be between Mr. McKinley and Mr. Bryan the present prospect favors Mr. Bryan's election.

It is a long look ahead, but at the same stage of events preceding the last national convention I succeeded in demonstrating, to my own satisfaction at least, McKinley's nomination and election now, with all the reserve arising from the fact that a prophet can never hope to be as accurate as a historian.

JAMES CREELMAN,

Why Boer Hates Briton.

The quarrel between the British and the Boers has its complications, but even at this distance it is possible to distinguish the main points of the controversy.

It is not the whole truth to say that this is merely another case of British land grabbing; neither is it entirely fair to charge the blame wholly to Boer stubbornness. There are two sides to this, as to every other question. Before you give your sympathy to either contestant there are a few facts which ought to be considered. Here they are:

The Boers were the original settlers of the country now known as the Transvaal republic, if we leave out of the question the savage African tribes which they subdued. Their ancestors went to South Africa from Holland. Boer is the Dutch for farmer. That is what the word means and that is what the are.

The first Boers settled in Cape Colony. Trouble with the English led them to move farther inland and farther north. They would build their kraals in one place and stay there until the encroachments of the English made it necessary for them to fight or trek. Sometimes they fought; sometimes they trekked.

When they finally moved beyond the Vaal river they thought they were safe from the English. The country was a savage-infested wilderness. But some day discovered gold and diamonds in the Boer territory. Then the English moved in and began to work the mines

The Boers are not miners. The golden rocks of the Rand would remain unchiseled forever if they had their way. They wish only to till their farms, raise their stock and read their Bibles.

But the glitter of the gold and the plint of the diamonds attracted more and more the sons of Britain. Men of other countries came too. There were some Germans and a few Americans. The Boers call them all outlanders, or outlanders. It is an expressive name.

Finally the outlanders became more numerous than the Boers. There are now in the Transvaal about 245,000 whites. Of this number more than 100,000 are English. Besides these there are 30,000 Germans, 10,000 Americans and a few hundred of almost every other race on the globe. So the Boers are actually in a minority in their own land. The remainder of the 1,000,000 population is composed of blacks, chiefly Kaffirs.

But this little handful of say 90,000 Boers has retained absolute sway in the territory which was wrested from the savages. For all practical purposes, only native Boers have full rights of franchise. They make the laws, levy the taxes and grip with jealous hands the reins of government.

Toward the outlanders the Boer attitude has been aggressive, autocratic and possibly oppressive. It depends on the point of view. The British miners have had to pay handsomely for the privilege of taking out the treasures which the Boers themselves neglected. They have been heavily taxed. They have been bled by government monopoly.

True, they have prospered and grown enormously rich in spite of it all. But so have the Boers, and it is the English who have done the work. Year after year the taxes have become higher, in spite of the indignant protests sent to England.

In the meantime the political relations of the two countries—the little republic and the great empire—have swung through several interesting stages.

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