

The Trusts and the People.

[SAM JONES in the Manufacturers' Record, Baltimore.]

The large trusts and combinations already formed and being formed by aggregations of capital are considered hurtful to the masses and the common people. This is a theory. Theoretically, a thing may be so, and practically it may be very untrue. When we speak of trusts and combines we think of the Standard Oil Trust, the Sugar Trust, the Tobacco Trust, etc. When the Standard Oil Trust was formed I was paying forty cents a gallon for kerosene oil; I am getting it now for ten cents a gallon. I was paying twelve and one-half cents for sugar several years ago, but when the combines set in we got it at five and one-quarter. When the Whiskey Trust was organized I was in hopes it would put up whiskey where the poor devils couldn't get it, but they have seemed to cheapen that down to where they can pay the Government \$1.15 a gallon revenue on it and yet sell it for \$1.27½, which demonstrates that they are making it and letting the public have it at about twelve and one-half cents a gallon.

There is no doubt about the aggregation of wealth, with brains controlling it, that they can manufacture any article cheaper than it is or has been manufactured on a small scale. The great railroad combinations, many think, will eat us up blood rare. Occasionally I get on a little jerk-water road that is not in the combination, and I want to double my accident policies and be satisfied with a 15-mile-an-hour gait and console myself with the idea that I can ride all day for a dollar, but when I get on the Pennsylvania or Vanderbilt system of roads, with their schedules forty miles an hour, vestibule trains, with parlor cars, sleeping cars, dining cars, I have a hotel on wheels carrying me toward my destination, and all this for about two cents a mile. Give me the road that is in the combine to carry me where I am going.

Public sentiment is the safeguard that is thrown around all aggregations of wealth and all combinations of interest. The Standard Oil, the railroad combinations, and the Sugar Trust are as sensitive to public opinion as the snow-bank to the rays of the sun. Trusts and combines will not hurt the public, but stockholders and bondholders may suffer later on, when these great bulky institutions become unwieldy and fall with their own weight. Fifty thousand men in the United States, perhaps not more, are interested in the great

trusts of the country. Those 50,000 men know that there are 70,000,000 of other people in America, and their wisdom teaches them where boundary lines are, over which they cannot go without peril to themselves and disaster to their business. No combination now says "Damn the public", but they have their weathercocks out on every prominent cupola watching how the wind blows.

Of course, political capital can be made out of such formations of wealth, and social orders may raise the black flag to fight them; but I am a thousand times more afraid of demagogues and politicians than I am afraid of trusts and combines. Good government—which means not only the well-being of the citizen, but the overthrow of all that will hurt the citizen—depends upon good men in office, and we had better pay less attention to what we call trusts and combinations and more attention to those whom we elect to office in the municipal, State and national governments. Mr. Stead, in his book, "If Christ Came to Chicago," speaks of the "Big Four of Chicago," and says of them that "their methods are clean and their transactions are honest, but that in the road of their success lies the blood and bones of the victims over whom they have run to success." The successful man or combination means the downfall of other men and other combinations. One preacher is preaching to 5,000, twenty preachers around him consider seventy five a full house, and a hundred a perfect jam; one physician making \$10,000 a year, and forty little doctors in the neighborhood not making their grub. A Wanamaker selling \$50,000,000 a year means many little merchants applying for clerkships in his store. It is the survival of the fittest, it may be. When God made this world he made mountains towering into the clouds and valleys below the level of the sea; he made lakes and oceans; he spread out the prairies of the West and piled up mountains around the little valleys along the ranges of the Rockies and the Alleghanies. In the ocean's waters we find whales and some very small fishes, and when the whales come along the little fish have to hide out. I have traveled over this country from ocean to ocean, and from Montreal to Galveston, annually for twenty years. I have watched the progress of events and the processions as they marched. I have yet to know of a single instance where combines and trusts hurt the masses or

permanently raised the price of any product. I am a thousand times more willing to deal with the trusts and combines and purchase their products than I am to put my money into their institutions and imperil my holdings, conscious of their want of stability and fearing their final downfall.

Of course these great combinations affect legislation, if they do not control it, in many instances, but while they may procure legislation in their own interest, yet they have one eye on public sentiment all the time, conscious that they can go just so far and no farther. Here and there they have shut down a manufactory or closed up an institution and affected some individuals, but we are not looking from that standpoint. When we look at the 70,000,000 of our population, we say they are only procuring cheaper and buying for less money these products than they could have done under other circumstances.

With the final disintegration of trusts and combines—which will inevitably come when financial disaster and shrinkage of values shall come—of course, the surplus of their product will be thrown upon the market, and only the stockholders in these trusts and combines will suffer. As sure as that the sun shines, whenever an institution becomes unwieldy because of its size and bulk, it will finally fall of its own weight.

I am an expansionists, and I believe that one of the causes of the stringency and shrinkage of values in this country is because we have not gone out over the seas with our products as we should have done. While there is a demand for our products of the farm and manufactory of this country there will always be plenty of money; but when wheat and corn and cotton and all kinds of manufactures are a drug on the market, and no demand for them, then we have stringency and hard times. But when the highways over the seas shall be laden with our products into foreign countries, and the gold is brought back in the ships, then we shall flourish perennially. These great combinations are the only powers in this country that can do this thing for us. A negro and an old mule can make corn and cotton; a fellow with a two hundred dollar saw mill can make lumber; but only aggregations of wealth can build ships and open markets in foreign lands.

Dropping the Mask.

William Jennings Bryan virtually admits that his first act as President would

be to pull down our flag and surrender the Philippines to Tagal robbers and murderers. Chairman Jones of the democratic national committee admits that such is Mr. Bryan's intention. In an interview at New York Senator Jones was asked: "What will Mr. Bryan do? Will he withdraw our troops from the Philippines immediately, if he is elected?" "Why not?" answered Senator Jones. "They were ordered to the Philippines. Why can't they be ordered back? They were taken in boats. Why can't they be brought back in boats?"

Senator Jones' statement was telegraphed to Lincoln, Neb., and shown to Mr. Bryan, who was asked if his first act as President would be to order the withdrawal of the American troops from the Philippines. Mr. Bryan refused to deny that such is his intention.

As commander-in-chief of the army and navy Mr. Bryan could, and Mr. Jones admits he would, abandon the Philippines. In withdrawing our troops Mr. Bryan would violate his oath of office by usurping power to alienate national territory without consent of Congress and by depriving himself of means of executing the laws in such territory. For these offences he could and probably would be impeached. But pending impeachment the army and navy would have to obey his orders and the mischief would be done. Our flag would be hauled down and the Philippines turned over to the Aguinaldo oligarchy.

Some weeks ago, Buen Camino, Aguinaldo's former Secretary of State, declared that the insurgents had written pledges from Mr. Bryan that if he should be elected President the Filipinos would be given independence. This charge Mr. Bryan answered only with the quibbling evasion that he had "never written a letter to any Filipino." George Fred Williams, in a public speech in Indiana last week, admitted that only hope of Bryan's election kept up resistance to American authority in the Philippines. Jones' statement, Williams' admission, and Bryan's tacit confession confirm Buen Camino's charge.

The American people should thank Senator Jones for his frank disclosure of Bryan's policy toward the Philippines. Jones has compelled Bryan to drop his mask and exhibit his intentions in their naked infamy. The Jones statement is but another way of declaring that, if elected President, Bryan intends to violate his oath of office and usurp the power of Congress to alienate national territory; proposes to abandon to Aguinaldo-

ite cutthroats the great majority of peaceful Filipinos who preferred and welcomed our rule; proposes to say to the mother of every American soldier killed in the Philippines that her son died as the fool dieth; proposes to trail the stars and stripes in the mud at the feet of Tagal assassins.—Inter Ocean.

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