

## BRYAN'S FORTUNE.

"Commoner" Yields an Income of Between \$20,000 and \$40,000 Besides His Lectures—His \$60,000 House.

Lincoln Cor. in New York Sun.

Col. William Jennings Bryan has not yet earned the title of "Lincoln's richest citizen," but in the past three years he has made rapid strides toward that honor. After the election of 1896 he issued an address to his supporters in which he said:

"The Republican candidate has been heralded as the advance agent of prosperity. If this proves to be true, we will all share in that prosperity."

For once the colonel had the gift of accurate prophecy. He has prospered, and prospered very well.

Lincoln bankers hesitate about placing an estimate upon Col. Bryan's wealth. One said that he was easily worth a quarter of a million dollars. Another placed it at \$200,000.

In actual, visible property, less than \$75,000 is put to Col. Bryan's credit. Of this sum the home at Fairview represents possibly \$60,000.

The house, a large, substantial brick structure of 22 rooms, stands on a large knoll, in the midst of the Bryan farm. The house was originally planned to cost \$200,000. It actually cost, after the usual modifications and changes, nearly twice that sum.

The outbuildings are of brick and stone and represent a pretty sum. The land itself is valuable.

Mr. Bryan disposed of the downtown residence which achieved considerable pictorial fame in his two campaigns, some months ago. He parted with it for \$5,500 cash to a banker.

The money was at once invested in a downtown lot, whereupon, in the near future, a building to house The Commoner will be erected. His other holdings in and about the city are valued at about \$7,000 or \$8,000. His Commoner outfit was put upon the taxroll by himself as valued at \$8,000.

Mr. Bryan's first draft upon the fame he won as Democracy's standard bearer in 1896 was for \$40,000, the proceeds of his book, "The First Battle." Half of this sum was invested in government bonds and the remainder went as a contribution to the silver cause.

Between 1896 and 1900 Mr. Bryan made a very large income by lecturing. He was able to command his own terms.

He never made any charge for the political speeches he made, but whenever an admittance fee was charged he exacted his share of the proceeds. The stories circulated in 1900 that he charged for the political addresses he made arose from the fact that the national committee being without funds to pay for his special train, the various State and local committees were assessed by the speakers' bureau for expenses.

In January, 1901, Mr. Bryan began the publication of his weekly newspaper. It has been a tremendous money maker. It began with a circulation, fully paid, of 50,000. Last week the issue was 148,000.

If the concern were capitalized on the basis of its net earnings at 6 per cent., it would be worth all the way from a quarter to a half million dollars. Local publishers estimate its net earnings all the way from \$20,000 to \$40,000 a year. At the Commoner office no hint of the real clean-up is given.

When Mr. Bryan was first elected to congress he was earning scarcely \$3,000 a year as a lawyer. This was doing about as well as the average practitioner of his age here.

Mr. Bryan was not remarkable as an astute attorney; he had not had time to leave any impress upon

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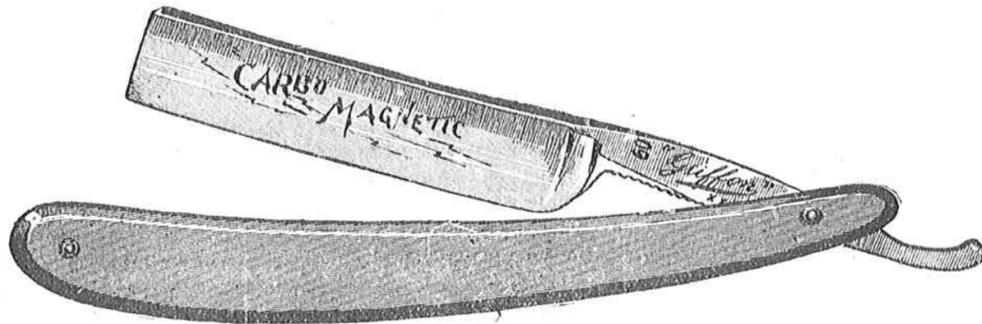
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