Heart to heart appeals

Bryan William Jennings
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Author: Bryan William Jennings

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Hon. William Jennings Bryan

(Photograph of portrait painted for the State Department by Irving G. Wiles of New York. It represents Mr. Bryan in the act of presenting to foreign Ambassadors and Ministers his peace plan, which is now embodied in thirty peace treaties with nations exercising authority over three-fourths of the population of the world.)
Heart to Heart Appeals

By

WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

"I live for those who love me, and the good that I can do."
—Bradford

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These heart to heart appeals, scattered through speeches delivered during a quarter of a century (1890 to 1916), are collected and republished in the belief that they may be of permanent interest to the friends whose continued confidence has been an inspiration and whose constancy has been an ample reward for whatever service I may have been able to render to my country during the eventful days we have been collaborators in this favored part of the Lord's vineyard.
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GOVERNMENT

Ten Fundamental Propositions

I VENTURE to present ten propositions:

1. The social ideal towards which the world is moving requires that human institutions shall approximate towards the divine measure of rewards and this can only be realized when each individual is able to draw from society a reward proportionate to his contribution to society.

2. The form of government which gives the best assurance of attaining this ideal is the form in which the people rule—a government deriving its just powers from the consent of the governed—the form described by Lincoln as "A government of the people, by the people and for the people." This being the people's government, it is their duty to live for it in time of peace, and die for it, if necessary, in time of war.

3. The chief duty of governments, in so far as they are coercive, is to restrain those who would interfere with the inalienable rights of the individual, among which are the right to life, the right to liberty, the right to the pursuit of happiness, and the right to worship God according to the dictates of one's conscience.

4. In so far as governments are co-operative, they approach perfection in proportion as they adjust with justice the joint burdens which it is necessary to impose and distribute with equity the incidental benefits which
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come from the disbursement of the money raised by taxation.

5. Competition is so necessary a force in business that public ownership is imperative wherever competition is impossible. A private monopoly is indefensible and intolerable.

6. “Absolute acquiescence in the decision of the majority” is, as Jefferson declares, “the vital principle of republics, from which is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism.”

7. As acquiescence in the permanent existence of a wrong is not to be expected, it is the duty of every citizen to assist in securing a free expression of the will of the people, to the end that all abuses may be remedied as soon as possible. No one can claim to be a good citizen who is indifferent. Civic duty requires attendance at primaries and conventions as well as at the polls.

8. The government being the people’s business, it necessarily follows that its operations should be at all times open to the public view. Freedom of speech is essential to representative government, and publicity is as essential to honest administration. “Equal rights to all and special privileges to none” is a maxim which should control all departments of government.

9. Each individual finds his greatest security in the intelligence and happiness of his fellows—the welfare of each being the concern of all—and he should therefore exert himself to the utmost to improve conditions for all and to raise the level upon which all stand.

10. While scrupulously careful to live up to his civic responsibilities, the citizen should never forget that the larger part of every human life is lived outside of the domain of government, and that he renders the largest service to others when he brings himself into