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The Test of Democracy.

Abstract of a Speech Delivered by Mr. Bryan at the Annual Dinner Given by the Jefferson-Jackson-Lincoln League on Lincoln's Birthday, Feb. 12, at Columbus, O.

The following is the substance of the speech delivered by Mr. Bryan at Columbus, O., February 12, at the dinner given on Lincoln's birthday by the Jefferson-Jackson-Lincoln league. Hon. John J. Lentz was toastmaster and ex-Governor Budd of California and Mayor Tom L. Johnson of Cleveland also made speeches. Mr. Bryan said:

It is entirely appropriate that we celebrate this day. In April, 1859, the republicans of Boston celebrated the birthday of Thomas Jefferson, and Abraham Lincoln in a letter expressing his regret that he could not be present eulogized the author of the Declaration of Independence in eloquent terms. Lincoln said at another time that he had no political principles that he had not drawn from that Declaration. If the early republicans could honor the natal day of Jefferson in 1859, we democrats can at this time observe with fitting ceremony the birthday of Lincoln.

I am glad to be present on this occasion, and I appreciate the generous words of compliment spoken by the toastmaster, Mr. Lentz. We are fortunate in having with us in our fight against foes within the party and against foes without, so able and courageous a democrat as Mr. Lentz has shown himself to be. I was glad to listen to the distinguished ex-governor of California. You are to be congratulated upon his presence, not only because of the pleasure his speech has given you, but because he is a living proof that we have active and vigorous democrats on the Pacific coast. Pardon me if I call him a Budd of promise—and we have them all over the country. I was gratified to hear him refer to the work that Mr. Hearst has done personally and through his papers. Mr. Hearst has been of immense service to the party. He has shown that wealth need not lead a man away from the people; he has shown that he is willing to trust his fortune to the care of laws made by the masses. The democratic party has never condemned the accumulation of money by honest means. A man can have any amount of money—if he makes it legitimately—and still be a democrat. It is only when his money has him that he finds it necessary to become a republican in order to find congenial company. Jefferson, the greatest democrat of all time, was rich in this world's goods—richer for his day than Hearst or Johnson are now—but Jefferson asked for no class legislation and lived up to the maxim, "Equal rights to all and special privileges to none." It has delighted me also to hear again the voice of Cleveland's mayor. I rejoice that Senator Hanna finds in his own home city a foe like Tom Johnson, who has the brains and the bravery to meet him and overthrow the commercial standard which the republican leader has set up. Mr. Johnson says that he has no higher ambition than to be mayor again. Well, God speed him in the realization of that ambition, but as long as I believe—as I believe now—that he only desires office because the office will enable him to protect the rights and interests of the people, I shall be glad to aid him. I care not to what he may aspire.

I have taken as my subject tonight, "The Test of Democracy," but I do not come to preach a new gospel or to formulate new rules. The principles to which we hold are not new principles; they are truths—self-evident truths—and truths are eternal. Jefferson did not invent the principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence; he merely stated them in language so apt that the words will always linger in the memory of man. Jackson did not create new principles; he simply applied with matchless courage the political doctrines handed down from a preceding generation. Neither did Lincoln originate new principles. He built upon the foundation laid by Jefferson. And we today are not seeking to secure the adoption of a new theory of government; we are only trying to make the government what the fathers intended it should be—a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

So with the rules for measuring men and parties, they are not new rules, they are rather the every day rules which we apply in the ordinary affairs of life. Nations and parties and men are judged by their performances rather than by their promises; by their works rather than by their words. In every calling, profession and occupation men are measured not by what they say of themselves, but by what they do, and it is even so in politics.

Christ laid down a rule that applies to the world as well as to the church. He knew that false prophets would arise to deceive and to mislead, and He gave to his disciples this sound, but simple test for distinguishing the false from the true: "By their fruits ye shall know them." He stated it even more strongly and said: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

There have been false prophets in politics also. There were false prophets in the days of Jefferson—men who professed great love for the people and yet would not trust the people. There were false prophets in the days of Jackson, and he was warning his countrymen against them when he said: "The path of freedom is continually beset by enemies who assume the guise of friends." The nation has its false prophets today who are declaring that duty to the Filipinos compels us to make subjects of them, and yet these false prophets are not willing to do their duty to citizens of the United States. Democracy has its false prophets now. They stand in the market places and talk about harmony—the very thing that they themselves destroyed. They demand the leadership and say to the party: "Did we not hold office in thy name, and in thy name draw large salaries?" If the party has learned wisdom by experience it will say: "Depart, I never knew you, ye that work iniquity."

Those who are old enough to aspire to leadership have made a record during the last seven

years and by that record they must be judged. The great fight between manhood and mammon began in 1896, and is not yet decided. Those who did not realize the nature of the contest then ought not to ask to be put in command over those who did, and those who knew the nature of the contest and yet directly or indirectly aided plutocracy must repent and bring forth works meet for repentance before they can be trusted with control.

We want harmony, but there can be no harmony between the party and men who call themselves democrats and yet oppose loyal democrats more bitterly than they do republicans. It is much easier to convert the republicans who really desire just government and equal laws than it is to draw back to the party those who, understanding the issues, supported the republican ticket in 1896 or voted for Palmer and Buckner, for many republicans, though not approving of republican policies, were held to the party by the strength of party ties, while the democrats who left their party gave positive proof that they preferred republican principles to democratic principles. Many republicans were held within their organization by the recollection of early republican arguments, but the democrats who went over in 1896 were attracted by the vices and hypocrisy of modern republicanism, and we do not want them to come back until they are disgusted enough to come back for good. They told us how it pained them to leave the party in 1896 and I do not want them to be compelled to go through the same anguish again, as they will have to do if they return to us with the hope of transforming the democratic party into a republican party.

The struggle between democracy and plutocracy is still on and must continue until one side or the other is completely triumphant. It is a real contest with the welfare of the race at stake, and we are not willing to have it converted into a sham battle. The platform of 1896 was democratic and the questions raised by it have not been settled. The platform adopted at Kansas City was also democratic, and the issues raised by it have not been settled—and the republicans have no plans for settling them. The reorganizers tell us that the money question has been disposed of, but no statement could be farther from the truth. True, we have some five hundred millions more money in circulation now than we had in 1896, but it only proves that we were right in asserting that more money would make better times. And yet with all this unexpected increase in the circulation we still have too little money in the country. Reserves are loaned and reloaned and Secretary Shaw had to rush to the aid of Wall street and tide the financiers over a panic by giving them the free use of more than \$130,000,000 of government money. Not satisfied with this scarcity of money they are now seeking to make the silver dollar redeemable in gold and abroad the financiers are endeavoring to make gold dearer by driving silver-using nations to the gold standard.

Talk about the money question being set—
(Continued on Page 14.)