

Presentation of Portrait of Judge Bryan

The Salem, Illinois, Republican of June 24, 1915, contained the following report:

"Monday afternoon, at one-thirty, the portrait of Judge Silas L. Bryan was presented to the Bar association and Marion county by 'Aunt' Molly Webster, in the circuit court room with Judge Jett present. This portrait of Judge Bryan was sent here by the Hon. W. J. Bryan and subsequent arrangements were made to present it to Marion county to occupy a place in the art room of the court house along with other portraits.

"Circuit court convened at one-thirty of said day and then gave way for the exercises that attended the presentation of the portrait above described. The Bar association convened in formal session with the Hon. E. B. Vandervort, president, presiding. Hon. J. E. Bryan read a letter from Hon. William Jennings Bryan presenting the picture. 'Aunt' Molly Webster was then introduced, who spoke to the audience as follows:

"To the Judges, Lawyers and Supervisors of Marion County.
"Gentlemen:

"William Jennings Bryan has asked me to present this portrait of his father, Judge Silas Bryan to the citizens of this county, to be placed on the walls of the county's court house. For several reasons it seems to me eminently fitting that the portrait of Judge Bryan should be placed on these walls. First, he was a prominent lawyer of the county and the only district judge ever elected from Marion county. He served this district for a number of years and he was the father of the man who has attained national fame as a leader of one of our great political parties. A man who has been in politics for a quarter of a century and has been subjected to all sorts of criticisms during that time, but in spite of all ridicule and slander which has amounted at times to almost persecution he stands today before his God and his fellow men a man with clean hands and a pure heart. A man of whom his worst enemy can say nothing against his irreproachable character. And I am sure we are glad indeed to have the portrait of his father on these walls, since I know as do others here this afternoon that William Jennings Bryan has inherited many of his sterling qualities from his father. As we look

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upon this portrait it seems but a short while since Judge Bryan was among the living and we recall clearly those traits of character which made him the strong man that he was. We remember him best for his love of his fellow man, his unswerving devotion to right and duty and his unbounded faith in God. I recall now his habit of kneeling in prayer daily as the clock struck twelve regardless of where he was and of what he was doing. The poor and needy were never turned from his door, and many a boy struggling for an education found a friend indeed in him. Whenever he took a stand on any question he studied the matter carefully and when he was convinced he was on the right side no power on earth could change him. Although he was a stern man he was a just one and with it all he was very tender hearted. His home was known to all the vagrant train. He chided their wandering but relieved their pain. To relieve the wretched was his pride and aim, his failings leaned to virtue's side. And so in behalf of William Jennings Bryan I present to you this portrait of his father, to be placed on the walls of the county's court house. May the parents of today strive to instil into the hearts of their children the Christian virtues that so enriched the life of Judge Bryan is my prayer.

"Speeches of acceptance were made by members of the Bar association, the first of whom was the senior member, T. E. Merritt. He spoke in the highest praise of the life of Judge Bryan and pointed out the virtues in which Judge Bryan excelled. He was a man of redoubled honesty, judicial in his temperament and a man of the common people. The senator asked that as Judge Bryan was the first circuit judge of this county that his portrait should be hung in the circuit court room above the bench.

"The next speaker presented was Judge Dwight of Centralia, who made a very able speech in eulogizing the character of Judge Bryan. He spoke of the peculiar way in which Judge Bryan tried lawsuits and his unique way of reaching decisions. His remarks were most complimentary and very forcibly presented.

"J. J. Bundy next expressed the sentiment of the Bar association in accepting this portrait. He cited the acquaintance that his father had with Judge Bryan as he used to hear his father speak about him. J. J. Bundy is too young to remember Judge Bryan in his days of most activity. He said that while he differed with the judge in politics that this occasion was far from any such program, and that as a noble citizen, an honest judge, a man of strong character he joined heartily in accepting this portrait and wished that it might be placed in the art room.

"Judge Jett made the closing remarks in a most fitting manner telling about hearing his law tutor in Hillsboro discussing the said Judge Bryan. Judge Jett instructed the sheriff that he take charge of the portrait and hang it as he may see fit.

"Thus closed a very unique but short program."

NO CENSORSHIP ON MR. BRYAN [From the New York World, June 16, 1915.]

The World has received letters from various readers urging the New York newspapers to follow the example of a southern newspaper which has announced that it will not print Mr. Bryan's name or Mr. Bryan's statements.

The World can conceive of no more shocking abuse of the freedom of the

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press than such a censorship imposed by newspapers upon a public man with whom they differ. It is bad enough when the press is gagged by the government, as the case is in Europe, but a press that deliberately Prussianizes itself is unworthy to be free.

No newspaper disagrees more emphatically with Mr. Bryan in what he has done and said than The World; but the day will never come when its columns are closed to him or when he is refused the right to present his cause to The World's hundreds of thousands of readers.

The Bryan egotism, like the Roosevelt egotism, has often been a great public menace. But that is no reason why Mr. Bryan should not have his day in court. If the American people are not intelligent enough to arrive at a correct judgment of his conduct from his own words, they are not intelligent enough for self-government. If they are able to measure his offense, every statement he issues will strengthen the case against him.

In any event, The World's columns will remain open to Mr. Bryan, as they have always been open to Mr. Roosevelt and to other politicians whom it has been compelled to oppose in the public interest. Nothing would more quickly destroy public confidence in the honesty and fairness of the American press—and deservedly so—than a newspaper censorship upon public men by way of punishing

them for their actions and utterances. Such a press could not be free. It would have sold itself into slavery to its own passions and prejudices.

PARABLE OF THE TENDERFOOT

Chicago Tribune: Mr. Bryan is credited with the following parable as an answer to the question of whether he intends to remain in politics:

"Once upon a time a tenderfoot journeyed into the south on a hunting expedition. He lost his way in the backwoods. Presently he came upon a cabin. In front of the cabin sat an old man. The tenderfoot said: 'Hello!' The old man said: 'Hello!' The tenderfoot said: 'Have you lived here all your life?' The old man replied: 'Not yet!'"

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