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Mr. Bryan at Kansas City

GIVEN OVATION

(From the Kansas City Journal, June 28).

William Jennings Bryan didn't disappoint the thousands who crowded convention hall last night.

They came expecting a defense of the rigid, literal interpretation of the Bible. Mr. Bryan gave it to them. They came anticipating something of the old-time power of speech in scornful, sarcastic argument. They heard it.

And evidently they liked it. They cheered Mr. Bryan as once they cheered him, back in 1900, when he spoke as the "Peerless Leader" of a great political party. They cheered him this time as a preacher of the Word: as a defender of the faith of the old fathers.

And if there were those who did not like it, they remained silent.

Back there in 1900 Mr. Bryan preached eloquently of the double standard of money and won followers. Last night he preached a single standard of morals and alluded facetiously to it.

There was no hint of rebuke in his manner of speech for those who had so recently brought about the withdrawal of the first invitation issued to him to appear on the program of the convention. He seemed only glad of the opportunity to bring to a close the convention of the International Sunday School association—a convention declared by leaders of the organization to be the greatest yet.

But he made no apologies for his defense of the Bible intact. A Bryan whose voice has lost something of the old resonant ring, who is perhaps more feeble of frame, less emphatic of gesture, on whom has begun to tell the ravages of passing, strenuous years, it was yet the forceful fighting Bryan, who could offer no excuses for defending the thing he professed to believe.

PLEADS FOR BIBLE

(From the Kansas City Times, June 28.)

The largest attendance of the Sunday school convention was reached last night at the closing session. There was not an unoccupied seating space in the building.

Only a few persons left the hall before the end of the night's program. The audience was strictly attentive throughout. It was a Christian assemblage, eager to hear a prominent brother speak.

It was a demonstrative crowd, unlike the assemblages at the regular sessions of the convention. Long before the choir opened a musical program, the hall was filled.

Awaiting the president's call to order, the delegates sang. They clapped their hand in unison. A group in one section of the hall sang "America" while another section sang "God Be With You 'Till We Meet Again."

There were cheers and more songs. It was spontaneous singing, without leaders and without musical accompaniment.

If the crowd was demonstrative before the program began, it might be called uproarious when W. J. Bryan appeared in the archway at the back of the stage and descended the steps to the speakers' platform. He was escorted by three patrolmen, who guided the orator through the chorus.

Mr. Bryan wore a long black alpaca coat. His face was wreathed in the Bryanesque smile. He carried a palm leaf fan which he waved intermittently to the crowd and used it to fan himself.

Dr. W. O. Thompson, president, in-

troduced Mr. Bryan as "his friend."

When Mr. Bryan stepped to the speakers' rostrum, the crowd again stood and cheered for several seconds. Mr. Bryan motioned with his palm leaf fan and the crowd was seated. His first few words, acknowledging the introduction, were spoken in a clear voice which could be heard in the farthest parts of the hall.

Throughout his address, the commoner emphasized his remarks by gesticulating with the fan. Occasionally he fanned himself vigorously, when he became particularly vindictive against the doctrine of evolution.

His preachments of the old-fashioned religion and an unerring Bible were interrupted frequently by applause.

Mr. Bryan told of his forty years as a Sunday school teacher and related experiences he had in that time. He indorsed the principles of the international association and praised its work.

Mr. Bryan started speaking at 9:15 o'clock and closed his address at 10:45 o'clock.

TALKED BY RADIO

(From Kansas City Star, June 28.)

It was the same dynamic Bryan of ten years ago—twenty years ago—who talked into the microphone in The Star's radio studio last night. Times change. Political parties change, but Bryan—he might just as well have been addressing a chautauqua under a canvas top, instead of an invisible audience of countless thousands.

It was his first visit to a radio broadcasting station. It was his first experience of talking entirely to an unseen audience, but he plunged in with the same verbal aggressiveness that is typically Bryan.

He stood before the tiny microphone, a palm leaf fan grasped in his right hand which was clasped by the left hand behind his back. He emphasized each word with forcefulness, pausing only to wave the frayed fan in front of his face, causing his long white lawn tie to sway slightly in the breeze. Then back went the fan to its resting place behind his back, where it rested against the long loose alpaca coat.

Mr. Bryan talked into the microphone forcefully, emphasizing his remarks by shaking his head or bringing his lips into a straight line to carry home a point. He is older in years but has the same rigorous delivery of the "Prince of Peace" and "Cross of Gold" days.

Mr. Bryan was introduced by Dr. William T. Ellis, who said:

"How absurd to think of introducing William Jennings Bryan to any company of Americans—the biggest single human in our country; the man who embodies in himself more of moral force and idealism than any other single figure now in the world. The man who has stood as like Gibraltar for the things that are right, the things that are beautiful, the things that are American. I am proud to be permitted to introduce my friend, my fellow newspaper man, my fellow interpreter of the old Book, Honorable William Jennings Bryan!"

Mr. Bryan's address was a digest of his talk before the Sunday school convention last night, which is printed in another part of The Star. His preliminary remarks, however, were in praise of the radio. He said:

"I appreciate the opportunity that The Star has given me of speaking to its friends for a few moments before going to the convention, and I am deeply grateful to Dr. Ellis for his more than generous words. If any of you feel, as I do, that he has been guilty of gross exaggeration in his praise, just remember that a man in public life must be over-praised by his friends to make up for the abuse

which he gets from his enemies that he doesn't deserve, and having had my share of the abuse, I am entitled to my share of the flattery.

"One thing that I am always pleased about when I am eulogized, as tonight, is that the speaker who is guilty is never called upon to prove what he says, and therefore he avoids embarrassment. I have spoken over the radio once before—just once before. It was at Pittsburgh on the 12th of last March, and I am not yet out from under the spell of the radio. I spoke in the Presbyterian church at Point Breeze, and when I reached the church I found they had made arrangements to broadcast the address.

"On the pulpit was a little instrument I would not have noticed had I not known it was there. It was scarcely larger than a water glass, but that little instrument took my voice and scattered it through the air, filling each cubic foot of space in an area of 25 millions of square miles. I don't know how much further it threw my voice, for we haven't had a chance to hear from the outlying districts. That pastor received two thousand letters within two weeks from persons who had heard it. They came from as far west as California, as far north as Winnipeg, as far south as the Honduras, and as far as east as Porto Rico; and when, a few days afterwards, I visited the Westinghouse plant, an official told me that eight minutes after I had uttered a word, it had reached the sun, that my voice was still going on, and he didn't know where it was then, and I haven't been able to get track of it since.

"I think the radio is the most wonderful thing that man has yet drawn from out God's mysteries, and I do not know yet how much the world owes to the one who discovered this method of communication, but we have no doubt that it opens a field almost infinite in its extent, and we know that because of this means of communication, the world is being brought nearer together, and it is possible for one who has a message for the world to speak now to a larger audience than any human being ever spoke to in the days that are gone."

Preceding Mr. Bryan's talk, Dr. Ellis, war correspondent and author, addressed the invisible audience on the subject "The Big Thing that Has Happened in the World."

MR. BRYAN'S FINE MESSAGE

That was a noble and moving appeal that Mr. Bryan made at the Sunday school convention last night for the great ideals of religion. At a time when on every hand there is such a struggle for material rewards, when selfishness is made a god, when men seek ruthlessly to thrust out of their way every public interest that blocks their path, there is need to emphasize the saving truths of the teachings of Christ.

This is what Mr. Bryan did with forceful eloquence. His address was a sermon addressed to the America of ruthless greed and lawlessness; to the America of youthful criminals, and of men and women who keep within the letter of the law, but ignore its spirit.

There will be differences of opinion on Mr. Bryan's views on evolution. But these were an incident in his speech. On its fundamentals, on the principles of conduct he laid down, men and women of every shade of thought will heartily agree.

That righteousness exalteth a nation was his essential message. It is a message the country needs today.—Kansas City Star.

(An abstract of Mr. Bryan's address before the International Sunday School Convention will be published in the August issue of The Commoner.—Ed.)