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## OBSERVATIONS

It has taken the people of Lincoln, Bryan's home, a full week to calm down. For two or three days after the nomination the free silverites and populists and half the republicans were in a state of frenzy. The novelty of having one of their neighbors chosen as the presidential candidate of a big party was most too much for them. The people are more rational now, but the local feeling, always strong in a western community, is aroused and it is safe to say that of the votes that will be cast for Bryan electors in the state outside of what has been his legitimate following for years three-fourths will go to him, not because of a sudden conversion to the cause of free silver, but because Bryan is a Nebraskan. It is difficult to make eastern people understand the depth of this local feeling.

The people of the country have not yet ceased wondering at Bryan's hypnotic feat at Chicago. It is not at all surprising to the people who know the man and are familiar with his remarkable dramatic gifts and oratorical graces. Bryan had already won all the distinction it was possible for him to win in this state before the Chicago convention, and he has hundreds of friends and admirers who for the past year have looked forward to the time when he would be given a place on the presidential ticket of the populist or democratic party. That Bryan has for years imagined himself a man of destiny there is no doubt, and there is plenty of evidence in this city that ever since the first of the year he expected to receive the nomination in Chicago. Two or three months ago he commissioned a local photographer to take a photograph of his modest house at once, and at the same time he sat for a new photograph of himself and had one taken of his family in a group. All of these pictures were on sale here the morning after the nomination. Two months ago he told a friend that he expected to be the next president of the United States, that he would be

nominated at Chicago as a dark horse. He disclosed his plans at that time and they were followed to the letter. He said: "I shall not go to Chicago as a candidate. I shall go as a delegate. It is my intention to remain in the background, until there is a suitable opportunity for me to appear before the convention in the manner in which I am best fitted to make an impression. I will have the advantage of Bland and Boies in that I will be on the ground." It is conceded now that Bryan is something of a prophet.

The sober, intelligent, conservative people of Nebraska have long since taken an adequate measure of the character and mental capacity of Bryan, and while they give him the greatest credit for the possession of admirable personal qualities they have him firmly fixed in the category of demagogues, socialists and cranks.

Bryan has taken the crude demagoguery of Altgeld and Tillman and worked it over in the crucible of sophistry, and refined it and polished it until the product as he turns it out is so softened and disguised that many people are fooled by it. The most radical utterances of the pitchfork senator or the anarchist governor find in Bryan ready and emphatic indorsement, but his indorsement is in the seductive guise of sentimental sympathy. Altgeld and Tillman assail the cause of sound government with hammer and tongs, with bomb and battering ram. Bryan's endeavors are in precisely the same direction, but he avoids the tactics of bull dog belligerency and seeks to win his way by beguiling, first the outposts and then the garrison itself. He is diplomatic, facile, agile, oily-tongued. He is a finished actor—a brilliant low comedian. He represents everything that Altgeld and Tillman represent—many things that are distasteful to most thinking, reasoning people, but he presents his views in such manner as to delude and deceive. Radical to the last degree he somehow succeeds in passing himself off on the average audience as reasonable. Dangerous as the demagogue is always dangerous he yet convinces people that he is as innocent as a lamb. Acting in the role of an ingenu he is full of guile. He wages warfare from behind the mask of conciliation. He appears to be pouring oil on the troubled waters while he is in reality adding to the turbulence. Bryan is singularly fortunate in his physical presence. He is a handsome man. His features are classic, clear cut, fine lined. When he appears before an audience he awakens interest and sympathy. When he begins to speak he takes on an air of the most perfect sincerity, the greatest candor. His manner is so simple, so plain, so earnest, so frank that his hearers are irresistibly drawn to him. Then good humor is depicted in his countenance. As he speaks he smiles, and his smile grows and expands. It is infectious. It catches the audience. He is so pathetically honest! It is doubtful if there is another man in the country so gifted in the superficial, showy qualities of oratory. He has wonderful surface brilliance.

To what extent is he a hypocrite?

Bryan is not a hypocrite in the sense in which the term is ordinarily used. There is no affectation in the simplicity of his manner of living. He is honest in his comparative poverty. He does not seek to hoodwink the public for the benefit of some financial interest. He cannot be accused of lack of integrity. But he does use questionable means to accomplish the end he is seeking. Bryan has talked so long about the "common people" and the bondage in which they are held, and has so persistently advanced certain theories for their relief that he has worked up a certain amount of ecstatic fervor that makes him passionate and emotional, and he has convinced himself that salvation can be found in no other way than that which he advocates. The end must be attained. The people must be stirred. He has a pretty accurate idea of human nature. He deliberately appeals to their emotions, their prejudices, their passions. He employs artifice in subtle pleas to human cupidity. He does all this in the full knowledge of what he is doing, but excuses himself on the ground that the end justifies the means.

No man possessing Bryan's superficial brilliance was ever intellectually great. Even here at his own home, where idol worship has been going on for years, it is not contended that he is a man of intellectual depth. He took up the cause of free silver after Bland had given it a good start and invested it with a glamor of specious brilliance, but he has not added one new idea to the philosophy of flatism. He invented the phrase, "without waiting for the aid or consent of any other nation on earth," but he has never originated a great principle or propounded a new theory.

Mr. Bryan received distinction in Chicago, but we should be careful in our estimate of its importance and significance. A nomination for president of the United States by the great democratic party, the party of Seymour and Thurman and Tilden and Hancock and Hendricks and Cleveland and Hill and Whitney is one thing, and a nomination by a riotous mob composed of such men as Altgeld, Tillman and Penoyer is another and an entirely different thing. The democratic party was a great party. Its leaders were for the most part loyal, country-loving, intelligent, conservative, statesmanlike men. This new bubble of bluster that has arisen out of the wreck of honest democracy can hardly be dignified by the name of political party. It is the culmination of the socialistic and anarchistic movement of the last fifteen years. It is altogether fitting that the man who made frantic haste to pardon those red-handed murderers, the Chicago bomb throwers, should be a leading spirit in this national ebullition of secessionist and revolutionary sentiment. The Chicago convention, after the withdrawal of the democrats, was not a convention. It was a frenzied, hysterical assembly of sentimental socialists, crazy cranks and ranting alarmists. It was characterized by no element of patriotism or wisdom. Instead of being deliberative it was disorderly. Instead of wise counsel there was incitement of passion,

prejudice and emotion—a covert plea to cupidity.

It was a fizzing, seething mass of passionate men that fixed its favor on Mr. Bryan, and not a sober convention of democrats. A little consideration of the facts will temper our pride in the so-called honor that has been bestowed on our conspicuous and loquacious townsman. Mr. Bryan himself, however much he may gloss and disguise his speech, and the men who are back of him in his spectacular campaign, represent the dangerous, disrupting elements of the country. In Mr. Bryan's crowd are the debt-repudiators, fanatics, communists, radicals, sentimentalists, and anarchists. There are some good, honest-minded people with him, but they are in bad company. The platform upon which he stands is ridiculous in its expressions and revolutionary in its tendency. The wonder is that any man standing upon it should receive any consideration whatever from serious, intelligent people. So, when we come to consider it, there does not appear to be any considerable honor in the attention Mr. Bryan received in Chicago, and we fail to see, as some citizens outside of Mr. Bryan's crowd pretend, that Lincoln or Nebraska is in anywise distinguished by the remarkable event which followed Mr. Bryan's remarkable speech. In fact Mr. Bryan's new notoriety imposes a great responsibility on the people of this state.

We have withstood successive drouths and crop failures in this state. We have contended with the wildest populist vagaries and in the end vindicated the intelligence and good judgment of the whole people. We have defended the state against desperate defamation. When Waite was bringing contempt upon the people of Colorado, and Penoyer was making Oregon a laughing stock and Llewelling was upholding outlawry in Kansas and Altgeld was giving official sanction to anarchy in Illinois, Nebraska stood proudly by, untouched by the prevailing lunacy, her fair fame untarnished by assaults upon the public safety by outlaws unrestrained. We have been able, with some difficulty, it must be confessed, to uphold the honor and credit of the commonwealth. We have done all this, and now Mr. Bryan makes necessary a greater effort, a more thoroughly patriotic movement, than has ever been put forth in this state. Already Nebraska has been maligned and discredited as the home of the man who was made the choice of the yelling crowd in Chicago, and it becomes our serious duty to show to the people of the country that Nebraska does not indorse Mr. Bryan nor his platform of repudiation and revolution. If this state is to continue to hold up her head as she has in the past she must repudiate the repudiators. State welfare is involved in the outcome. It isn't so much a question of politics or of party as of patriotism. With Mr. Bryan seeking to carry the state with him into the mire of Altgeldism and Tillmanism, the battle cry, "Stand up for Nebraska," means more than it ever meant before.

It cannot be that the scenes of the French revolution are to be re-enacted