

Mr. Bryan on South America

Mr. Bryan's first public appearance as secretary of state was at a dinner given by Hon. John Barrett, the director-general of the Pan-American union to Mr. and Mrs. Bryan March 13. All of the representatives of South and Central America were present. It was a delightful occasion and introduced the new secretary to the representatives of the republics south of us, giving him a chance to assure them of the administration's friendly interest in their welfare and development.

The address of welcome was delivered by Ambassador Da Gama, of Brazil, the dean of the South American diplomatic corps.

Remarks of the Brazilian ambassador, Mr. Domicio Da Gama, in extending greetings to the new chairman of the governing board of the Pan-American union, the secretary of state of the United States, on the occasion of the dinner given in the latter's honor at the Pan-American union, Thursday evening, March 13, 1913:

"Mr. Secretary, Ladies and Gentlemen: I duly appreciate the honor that befalls me of presenting the greetings of the diplomatic representatives of the other American republics to the new secretary of state of the United States.

"I appreciate the honor and find the task a very agreeable one. To look with a joyous heart toward the rising sun is certainly a symbolic attitude and as human and natural as hope itself. Still better than to praise a man for his deeds, it is gratifying to bid welcome to the promising new worker in this ungrateful field of diplomacy where so often only thorns come when we expect flowers and fruits as a reward to our labor. We bid welcome to the man with a noble heart who for so many years has been preaching the advent of social justice, of respect to the rights of the individuals, of reciprocity in good will among men. After having made himself sure about the national needs in his country, after having fought the good battle for his political ideals at home, he went abroad to inquire about other people's needs. He has traveled extensively through South America with his keen eyes wide open and has seen and heard and retained much to his profit, to our benefit. And now that the fortune of national politics has brought him to the direction of the international politics of his country, we take advantage of his profitable wanderings along our southern lands to claim him as an old and sympathetic acquaintance, if not a close friend to all of us. Under such favorable auspices any man could easily be convinced that in diplomacy we always mean well, even when we appear to look for trouble, our differences in most of the cases being rather of expression than of essence. He could easily be convinced also that, under the law of the less effort, international politics which in this continent deals principally with those niceties of national feelings so dear to the patriotic Latin, has a greater tendency toward agreement than any business in the world, since to deal with permanent nationalities is not the same as to deal with passing individuals. But the present secretary of state of the United States knew all this before entering this new field of politics, where by the way he already looks so comfortably settled and so thoroughly at home. He certainly knows that to the man with a clear head and a kind heart the difficulties of his task are reduced by half. And we promise to use the best of our industry to help him in solving the remaining half, when occasion arises. So that, between personal good will and diplomatic desire to agree, our relations with the department of state and its new chief will be as cordially friendly as becomes partners in the great work of civilization in this our continent of America."

MR. BRYAN'S REPLY

Mr. Bryan, who, as secretary of state, is ex-officio chairman of the governing board of the Pan-American union, replied as follows:

"Mr. President, Senores, and Senoras: Whatever lack of confidence I may have in regard to other duties that may fall to the occupant of the office with which His Excellency, President Wilson has honored me, I feel sure that he could have found no one either in our party or in our country who could meet more cordially the representatives of Central and South America.

When the office was tendered me, one of the reasons that I gave for being willing to accept it was that it would enable me to join with our president in cementing even more closely nations that live so near us and are so identical with ours in their purposes and aspirations.

"The visit which my good wife and I paid to some, though not all, of these southern countries three years ago, increased, if possible, the interest which we felt in them and I am grateful to Director General Barrett for giving me, as my first opportunity of meeting diplomatic representatives around a banquet board, the privilege of meeting you who are so close to us and who share in the responsibilities of developing this western hemisphere dedicated to freedom. I am grateful, too, to the director general for having selected as the spokesman of this gathering tonight one who not only by his position stands at the head of the Pan-American diplomatic circle, but who so felicitously expresses your greetings and good will.

"He need not tell me that he has a high opinion of our country. I have had occasion to become acquainted with that fact; I have been sitting beside the better-half of his family. Possibly I ought not to say the better-half lest my remarks might be given a patriotic interpretation rather than the interpretation that we give; in this country we are glad to admit that a man is doing all that he can hope to do if he can even be the lesser-half.

"In the visit to Central and South America, I learned to appreciate a number of things which I have taken pleasure in communicating to the world. I found, for instance, at Lima, an institution of learning that has the distinction of being the oldest in the Western Hemisphere. I was surprised myself, and I have surprised others by communicating the fact, that the university at what was then the capital of Spain's South American possessions, was established more than fifty years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock and that it has had a continuous existence. Not only its age, but its tendency impressed me. I learned that during the early years of its existence it cost \$10,000 to graduate. It was an expensive thing, for learning then was monopolized by a few. Something like 140 years ago this cost of \$10,000 was reduced by statute to a deposit of \$2,000, but still it was quite an aristocratic institution. It was reduced in 1870 to \$800, but since that time the progress toward democracy in education has been so rapid that now it costs \$100 to secure one degree and \$50 another. This illustrates what is going on not only throughout South America, but all over the world.

"Education is being brought within the reach of all the people and it gratified me to learn that, whatever might be the percentage of illiteracy in the countries that I visited, it was everywhere decreasing, and I felt that our nation could not be complimented more highly than it was being complimented in those countries which I visited. I found, for instance, in Peru, a group of Americans who were there by invitation and who were paid out of the treasury of the country. They were assisting in the improvement of the school system. I found in the beautiful capital of that mountain republic, Bolivia, a college established by Americans at the request of the Bolivian government, and I have been informed tonight by his excellency, the minister from that country, that the appropriation for the support of that college has been increased since I visited his country.

"I was flattered, as an American, to find that Uruguay had patterned her school system after our school system and when I visited a school in the City of Montevideo, but for the language, which I could not understand, I might have mistaken it for a school in our country, so completely is it modeled after ours. In the great republic represented so well by his excellency, the ambassador from Brazil, I found a great normal school that was built and is conducted according to the plans taken by an American woman from the state of New York. Few days in my life have made a deeper impression upon me than that day that I spent in San Paulo when they took me through this building and then conducted me to the assembly room where the students of the higher classes were gathered. Every seat was occupied; the aisles were full and young men stood back through the doors into the outer hall. Over each window were two flags—the Brazilian flag and ours. A professor, speaking for the school, delivered an

address of welcome. He told how their constitution had been patterned after ours and how even their flag, like ours, had a star for every state. Then when he was through, a young man, twenty or twenty-one years of age, spoke for the students. He also spoke in English, and his voice trembled with emotion as he said that our nation had been an inspiration to Brazil and it was their ambition to make Brazil like the United States; then a young lady recited a poem in English, and then, to my amazement, the entire school rose and sang "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing." I confess that I was touched as I have seldom been touched in a foreign land and I expressed what I believe to be the sentiment of the people of this country. I told them that I saw fulfilled on that day the dreams of our forefathers—that those who laid the foundation of our nation were anxious that it should conquer the world, not with its arms but with its ideas, and that our people would be happier to know that they sang our songs and were grateful for our example—happier far than they would be to have them as sullen subjects under a flag that they did not love.

"We returned from a delightful trip, after having received courtesies from all the nations visited, courtesies that I knew were not intended for us as individuals, but for us as citizens of a great country.

"So, tonight, as a representative of our government—as the one who by virtue of his office comes into closest contact with those who are here, the accredited representatives of other lands—as the occupant of this position, I say, I am grateful for this opportunity to meet you and to mingle with you. I am glad to assure you of the pacific purpose and the genuine friendship which the president of our great nation entertains toward all the people and all the governments of Central and South America, and to assure you that I am in complete sympathy with him in this friendship and interest. We desire that you shall know us and that our people should know you. We desire that our exports to your country shall increase and that our imports from your country shall increase, but I believe that the most valuable thing that can be sent across the border line of nations is an ideal. I am glad, therefore, that however we may feel about the tariff on other commodities there is free trade in ideals; we have gathered ideals from all the world; we are indebted to the world for ideals selected from every section. I have no doubt but that we shall be able to borrow from the experiences of our neighbors on the south and we shall be glad to loan to them anything that has been developed and perfected here. We are not only glad to give you the advantage of our experience, not only glad to allow you to learn by our trials, our experiments and our mistakes, but we are glad to have our people go among you, to assist you in developing the resources of the great countries that lie to the south of us. I am sure that I speak for his excellency, the president, as I speak for myself and for all associated with him in authority, when I say that we shall insist that the business men who go from our country to yours, to help to develop your resources, shall carry with them the same high standard of honor and integrity that we demand of business men in our country. We shall be even more exacting of them, for when people come among us, if they find a man who is bad, their opinion of our country may be made good by ascertaining that he is an exception; but when a man goes from us to a foreign country he must be even better in behavior because there are not so many to help him represent our nation. I am sure that this administration will be quick to admonish all who go among you that they go to represent the highest ideals of our country and that they must not fall below that standard.

"But I am not here to make a speech; I am here to mingle with you about this board; to become better acquainted with you, and I have arisen simply to acknowledge, for the president of the United States as well as for the department of state, your friendly greetings and to assure you that your good will is most heartily reciprocated."

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