

The Grasty Dinner at Baltimore

Charles H. Grasty, editor of the Baltimore Sun, gave a complimentary dinner to Mr. Bryan at Baltimore. Referring to the affair, the Sun says:

Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan came to Baltimore fresh from his successful mission to California in the interests of international peace and harmony, to be the guest of Charles H. Grasty at a dinner given in his honor at the Hotel Belvedere.

It was Mr. Bryan's first visit to Baltimore since the memorable convention of the democratic party last summer, in which he played so prominent a part, and it gave him the opportunity to renew many acquaintances he made on that occasion, to meet many of his political friends and to give a number of former political enemies a new light upon his character.

Gathered around the board were men in the democratic party who had fought Mr. Bryan in the past, tooth and nail; standpat republicans and bull moosers, as well as men who have followed the banner of the commoner wherever it has led in the years gone by, and who still hold for him feelings of loyalty and affection as deep as it is possible for one man to hold for another. But no matter what their previous political condition had been, they were all Bryan men last night and joined in the applause and the cheering which greeted the telling points in his speech.

The speech was a memorable one and some of those who had heard Mr. Bryan on a number of occasions said it was one of the best he had ever delivered. Its breadth, charm, generosity and philosophy delighted all who heard it, and at one period of its delivery, when he suggested that he was about to conclude, cries of "No, no; go on!" rang out from all parts of the banquet hall.

Mr. Bryan spoke from the heart. His speech was extemporaneous, for he had no time to prepare anything. His mission to the Pacific coast had required all his time, thought and patriotism, and, incidentally, it proved his mettle as a statesman. He arrived in Washington only yesterday morning and after making his report to President Wilson he came to Baltimore to be with those who had been asked to meet him.

Mr. Bryan's speech effectually put the quietus upon all rumors that have been afloat ever since he entered the cabinet of President Wilson to the effect that there was friction between himself and the president, that he could not stand the strain of playing second fiddle and that he would retire.

Of course, those who know Mr. Bryan and President Wilson have known all along that there was nothing to these rumors, and that the two men were not only in harmony, but they have a sincere regard for one another. But the rumors have been given with so much circumstantiality that many believed them.

No man who heard Mr. Bryan last night now believes there ever was a scintilla of truth in them. Every word he uttered breathed the truest sincerity, and his tributes to the president the generosity with which he denied that he was instrumental in bringing about Mr. Wilson's nomination and the earnest loyalty to the president and his policies which marked his every reference to either carried conviction.

Not only that, he convinced his hearers that he bore no grudges toward those who had opposed him in the past. What has gone before with him was "as we say in diplomatic circles a closed incident." That brought out a jolly laugh, but his succeeding statement that he was convinced that no load breaks down a man so quickly as a load of revenge was followed by a roar of applause. The entire trend of his remarks showed that in his heart there was no bitterness, that his view of conditions was the view of the philosopher, who has seen his teachings justified and is satisfied.

As for the outcome of the democratic convention and the part he played in the result, he was frank. It was pleasant, he told his hearers, to have enthusiastic friends extoll the part he played, but they did not deceive him. No one man, no set of men could have brought about that result. It was no local movement, no reform springing up in the west, it was not even an American movement; it was the result of a movement as wide as the world. And so far from having heartburnings at the victory of another, he rejoiced that another could win where he had lost. And he felt it was better so. Mr. Bryan's tribute to his chief was genuine and sincere and brought out the warm applause

it merited. "He has already won his place in history, and from what he has already done he has convinced us all that we will not be disappointed in the performance of the tasks that are yet before him."

In introducing Mr. Bryan, Mr. Grasty said: "In 1896, in Chicago, in a western cyclone of patriotic protest against privilege and abuse, the progressive democracy was born."

Just here Omer E. Hershey called out: "Where were you then?"

"In the cyclone cellar," replied Mr. Grasty. "Where are you now?" shouted another voice.

"On the roof," said Mr. Grasty. And he went on with his speech.

"In 1912, in this old city of Baltimore, on the very rim of what had been the enemy's country, in a similar outburst that cause saw its final triumph.

"I think you may scan the pages of history in vain for another case of the same man presiding at the birth of a cause and with his own hand managing its consummation.

"More remarkable still, he guided it through all its 16 years of peril and storm, standing when it was to stand, fighting when it was to fight, and, with Martin Luther, grimly saying: 'Here we stand; we can do no otherwise; God help us!'

"Many a time the pioneer's fate has threatened him. Many a time others have strutted in his plumage. When the whigs abandoned the issue of free trade and the Tories adopted it Disraeli said that 'the whigs went in swimming and the Tories stole their clothes.' While the democratic progressives were wandering naked in the wilderness Roosevelt borrowed their raiment. It didn't fit him or his party, so they cast it off.

"Is it not poetic justice that the Roosevelt who was so deft in appropriation is the same Roosevelt who made easy and sure the coming of the democratic progressives into their own? And now the Roosevelt rooster is not crowing as it used to. He is kind of pippy. He's like the historic chanticleer. That rooster crowed every morning just before sun-up. One night he went to spend the night with the pheasants and overslept. When he awoke the next morning the sun was high in the heavens. It broke his heart. He had always thought that it was his crowing that made the sun rise.

"Baltimore is the place where our honored guest will always be most honored. We remember every detail of his lion-like leadership in the greatest convention ever held. And we can never forget that wild night when he caught predatory Wall street and crooked politics with the goods on. They vowed that they were not convicted because he didn't press one of the indictments. But they have sat mighty tight and quiet ever since. They are like the man charged with stealing a pair of pants. The jury acquitted him. The crowd fled out of the courtroom, but the acquitted man kept his seat. Finally his lawyers went to him and said: 'You are free, why don't you go home.'

"'Because,' replied the man, 'I have the pants on, and I'm afraid if I get up the judge or the jury will see them.'

"And now the democratic progressives have 'come unto a land where it is always afternoon.' None have ever been enemies who now are friends. A generous amnesty sheds its warmth upon every wanderer. The mantle of charity covers every past fault. The first forward-looking man whom the president called to his side brought with him, in a solid wall of support, the host of Americans who had followed him, and in his patience and courage and self-effacement and deep practical Christianity there is inspiration for the great tasks to be performed, and in their performance, in the realization of his dream of equality of opportunity and social justice, there will be reward a-plenty according to his heart's desire for the commoner."

Secretary Bryan's speech in full was as follows:

"Mr. Grasty, honored guests, gentlemen: I am grateful to Mr. Grasty for the opportunity that he has given me of meeting you around this board. The introduction to which I have listened makes it impossible for me to avoid one line of thought that he has suggested. I do not come here to make any speech on any particular subject. I came here to be his guest and to meet his friends, and my thought was entirely on the pleasure that I would derive from this gathering and not upon anything that I would be

expected to say. Even if I were prepared to speak at length, I think that the opportunity of speaking is to be shared by others—at least it would be a fatal defect in this program if others were not given an opportunity to speak, for we have those here who can and ought to.

"We have another representative of the state department. I hope he will not be allowed to escape. (Laughter.) I have to rely upon my third assistant (referring to Dudley Field Malone) to tell me what it is proper to do in diplomatic matters, and he ought to share my portion tonight.

"You have here a representative of the president and he really ought to have been introduced before myself, because I am only a secretary (laughter) and there are 10 of us and only one Tumulty. (Applause.)

"Then we have a representative of the senate here and that august body ought to be heard. We have also a representative of the house of representatives—a very representative member of the house of representatives, a member of the ways and means committee, and I am sure that this body would never forgive itself if it did not give Palmer a chance to express his exaltation over the passage of this tariff law. (Applause.)

"Then we have here also one who is so much better versed in diplomacy than any of us young men that I think he ought to be heard from. How many more are there? (Laughter.) And I have not spoken of your local lights here, but there are enough around to make my candle seem dim.

"But, if I must say the word on the subject that has been brought forward, it will not be a word of censure. I have no disposition tonight to speak harshly of the 'storm cellar.' I have no intention of calling the roll to see how many were in and how many were out. (Laughter.)

"A man who has had as much trouble as I have had is so glad to have them out (laughter) that he never refers to the fact that they were in. (Laughter and applause.) You know in diplomatic circles we speak of an incident being closed. I have closed many incidents in my life. (Laughter and applause.) After each defeat I have habitually forgiven those who were responsible for it. (Laughter and applause.) I have forgiven them for several reasons. In the first place, so many have contributed to it that my indignation, when scattered over them all, amounted to very little to each. (Laughter.) And then I had another reason. There is no load that will break a man down so quickly and so surely as a load of revenge. The man who tries to get even with others has few opportunities of gratifying his hatred, but he is all the time corroding himself. (Applause.)

"I have had so many friends to get even with that I knew I never could get even, and surely a man ought to wait to get even with his friends before he begins with his enemies. And, then, I have not felt like being harsh with those who differed from me, because I have felt that if I were right and they were wrong, I had reward enough to satisfy me and they had punishment enough for them to bear. (Applause.)

"The older I grow the less inclined I am to be harsh in criticism. I was speaking in an English town a few years ago and speaking of the value of acquaintance, and I was encouraging visiting between countries as a means of getting acquainted. I was speaking of the value of acquaintance as a means of preventing misunderstanding when there flashed into my mind the thought that I had never heard emphasized and I gave expression to it, and I think it is worth repeating. I thought of Christ's prayer upon the cross.

"'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'

"I believe that has not been emphasized as it ought to have been. That is, we have not sufficiently considered the element of ignorance in the making up of our judgments. We have not sufficiently considered the effect of lack of information. When people err it is more often a lack of information than it is a desire to err.

"Few people desire to err and yet all of us err. To err is human. There is lack of information; there has been and there was in 1896. There were many people in 1896 who thought that the silver question was the paramount issue. They may have been justified in thinking so, because the platform so declared. And it ought probably to have been said that the silver question is the surface issue, because it was merely a manifestation of a difference.

"People wrangled over the silver question, but the real question—and many did not see it

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