

The Bryan Birthday Dinner

The annual Bryan birthday dinner, under the auspices of the Lincoln Bryan club, was held at Lincoln, March 19. Following are extracts from the report of the Lincoln (Neb.) Journal:

"Six hundred or more Nebraskans sat around really bountiful banquet tables last night in celebration of the birthday of the commonwealth's greatest citizen, the sixth event of its kind under the auspices of the Lincoln Bryan club, and the fifty-fourth birthday to which the guest of honor is willing to acknowledge.

"It was a non-partisan celebration, with admiring republicans and progressives very much in the minority. The greater number of the banqueters were Lincoln citizens, but the percentage of faithful and enthusiastic democrats from distant parts of the state was marked. There were men who have been seen in every such celebration since it became an annual function.

"The guest of honor was not present, the first time in the history of the annual celebrations that he has been unable to appear in answer to the summons. The audience may, in consequence, have been somewhat smaller. On some occasions the Lincoln auditorium has been uncomfortably filled. Last night there was just about elbow room.

NOTABLE SUBSTITUTES

"The Bryan club officers, unable to coax the leader from his secretary's desk, did the next best thing, and persuaded democratic orators of national repute to journey half way across the continent to pay eloquent tribute to the democratic president of the United States, and the cabinet member from Nebraska who made him president.

"Senator J. T. Robinson, governor of Arkansas, just before he was given the right to wear a senator's toga, a sturdy supporter of the administration, came with a defense of the Mexican policy of President Wilson and Secretary Bryan, his chosen subject being, "Watchful Waiting." Governor James M. Cox of Ohio, fresh from a series of triumphs as executive of a great state, brought a message of unstinted praise of Bryan and Wilson and to explain the progressive pace of his state. His toast was, 'Progress in Government.' Joseph W. Folk, terror of boodlers in St. Louis, then governor of Missouri, and now counsel for the interstate commerce commission, came to sum up for Nebraska the achievements of the administration and, to outline under the title, 'The New Democracy,' what is yet to be done.

WOMEN TAKE A PART

"More distinctly than ever before at Bryan birthday banquets the ladies of Nebraska played a part. Possibly one banqueter out of five was a lady. They have sat in the gallery on other occasions of the kind. This year an effort was made to get the ladies to attend on equal terms with the wielders of the ballot. They answered readily and in force.

"Each speaker took occasion to mention the presence of the ladies. Governor Morehead recalled their participation from the galleries on former occasions, and was glad to see them 'feeding with the brutes' on the main floor this time. Senator Robinson congratulated them and praised them without stint. Governor Cox gave the women of America credit for pushing through congress child labor regulation laws.

"The chief speaker of the evening, Former Governor Folk of Missouri, too, noticed the sprinkling of women in the audience, and remembering Governor Morehead's remarks about former attendance in galleries only, said that their presence was evidence of the advance in political thought in the nation. His reference to the subject was marked by a quietness in the audience that was not noticed at any other time, one of those infrequent perfect quiet moments that sometimes sweeps over a great audience at a critical point in a speech.

"Mr. Folk reviewed the old theory of the rights of women, and the laws on statute books of some states even within a generation, remarked upon the fact that in nine states women are 'actually' permitted to vote, and continued: 'I believe the right to vote should be based on intelligence and not on sex. With that as the standard the franchise would be transferred in many families I have known. If women are human as they claim to be, if they are people as they are supposed to be, we can not deny

THE PROGRAM

President Lincoln Bryan Club and Toastmaster.....Mr. E. F. Snavely, Lincoln
 Invocation....Rev. H. H. Harmon, Lincoln
 "Flag Without a Stain".....
Adelphian Quartet, Nebraska
 "A Democrat".....
 ..Governor John H. Morehead, Nebraska
 "Watchful Waiting".....
 ..Senator Joseph T. Robinson, Arkansas
 "Progress in Government".....
Governor James M. Cox, Ohio
 "The New Democracy".....
Hon. Joseph W. Folk, Missouri

them the right to vote. I am not among those who fear to see the extension of the franchise to the other sex or their influence in politics.'

"Mr. Bryan did the next best thing to being present. He sent a message of greeting which was read just before the close of the program.

"The managers of arrangements found room enough on the stage to seat the guests there in an unusual manner. Tables were in form of a triangle, the base to the front for the speakers of the evening. Lesser lights grouped themselves along the sides. At the chief table were the four speakers, E. F. Snavely, toastmaster and president of the club, and Rev. H. H. Harmon.

"Music was furnished by the Adelphian male quartet. These men back in 1892 were students at Doane college. They sang in Mr. Bryan's early campaigns. They are now scattered over the state but came together especially for the occasion. In one of their numbers a pretty effect was secured by a young lady, Miss Tinklepaugh of Lincoln, draped in the national colors, who stepped in front of the singers and held aloft the stars and stripes.

"This birthday banquet was different than any of the others in one very conspicuous matter other than the absence of the guest of honor. The toastlist was purposely kept smaller than customary, and the speeches were shorter. Where on former occasions of the same kind the audience has remained from 7 o'clock in the evening until 2 o'clock the next morning, last night's celebration terminated shortly after 10 o'clock. Warned by former sad experiences of toastmasters whom the audience did not want to listen to in long introductions, Mr. Snavely was pointed and brief. He spoke but very briefly in the first instance and with even more brevity in introducing the speakers.

"Former Governor Folk was the chief speaker of the evening. His effort was more extended than any of the others. Governor Morehead contented himself with a short manuscript picturing the greatness of Nebraska and of her foremost citizen. This address he read. Governor Cox was the most eloquent of the four, and rather bordered on the humorous more than the others. Mr. Folk spoke with a husky accent, but his voice penetrated to every part of the hall. He plead the cause of new democracy using the term not in its party significance, but at the same time giving a large measure of credit to the democratic party for the advancement of the principles which he set forth as signs of the progress of the new order of things. It was a plea for religion in politics, for honesty in public and corporate life such as society demands of the individual. It was a picture of the old order of things, such as he met and routed in St. Louis with the new order as exemplified in the national administration and in the work of states like Ohio.

"'Lincoln and Jefferson each earned fifty millions of dollars,' said he, 'but they were so busy earning it that they had no time to collect. Other men in this country have made fifty millions, but they have been so busy collecting it that they have forgotten to earn it.'"

FROM MR. BRYAN

Mr. Bryan, unable to be present at the banquet, sent the following telegram which was read by Toastmaster Snavely:

Washington, D. C., Mar. 16, 1914.—Mr. E. F. Snavely, President Lincoln Bryan Club. My

Dear Mr. Snavely: I regret exceedingly that official duties prevent my attendance March 19 upon the dinner with which my Nebraska friends are accustomed to celebrate the anniversary of my birth. Those dinners have always been very happy occasions to me, and the opportunity which they afford for renewing acquaintance with a multitude of loyal co-laborers is increasingly appreciated.

Please present to those assembled a loving greeting from Mrs. Bryan and myself. On the last anniversary we exulted over the great victory our party had won throughout the nation, and yet our joy was restrained by a sense of responsibility for the proper use of the authority conferred. Today we look over a year rich in achievements. President Wilson has more than realized our highest hopes by the splendid record he has made. Under his wise and courageous leadership the party has already rendered signal service to the country and strengthened its claim upon public confidence. We recall the past twelve months with satisfaction and view the future with assurance.

If I may be pardoned for referring to the part with which the president has honored me, I am glad to report progress. It has been my privilege to sign the document which concluded the twenty years' contest for the popular election of senators and added to the constitution the amendment making this change. The signing of treaties is the most pleasant of my tasks. No peace plan has ever before received such immediate and wide-spread approval as that which was last year offered to all the nations. The governments which have already accepted the principle represent more than three-fourths of the population of the world. Thirteen treaties have been signed, four more have been authorized and some eight governments are now considering the details. It seems probable that within one year from the day when the peace proposal was authorized by the president fully one-half the people of the globe will be linked to us by treaties which will provide for a year's investigation before war can be declared by either of the contracting parties.

But I can not in the brief space of a letter set forth all the reforms accomplished by this administration, and the presence of your distinguished guests makes it unnecessary to do so. Governor Folk, Governor Cox, Senator Robinson and Governor Morehead are able to tell you what has been done thus far and to interpret the party's pledges as applied to the future. Governor Folk has for years been a leader among the progressive democrats of the nation; Governor Cox, although in executive office but little more than a year, has already earned a place in the front ranks of reformers, and Senator Robinson is a pillar of strength to our party in that body. You are familiar with the good record made by your own governor. I am grateful to these gentlemen for attending the dinner and envy you the opportunity you have of hearing them.

In view of the triumph of the principles and policies for which the democracy of Nebraska has contended for so many years I beg to offer, as my contribution to your intellectual feast, a very appropriate sentiment expressed in most felicitous language by James Russel Lowell:

"Get but the truth once uttered, and it is like a star new born, that drops into its place, and which, once circling in its placid round, not all the tumult of the earth can shake."

Very truly yours,
 WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN.

THE TOASTMASTER'S ADDRESS

In the beginning Mr. E. F. Snavely, the toastmaster, said:

"On behalf of the Lincoln Bryan club, I desire to thank the members of the club and the members of committees for the assistance in carrying out the arrangements for this occasion. This is the first time the ladies have been invited to sit at the banquet board and we are more than gratified at their presence here tonight. This is an informal meeting of neighbors and friends to do honor to a fellow citizen and a life full of service. For six years we have celebrated this anniversary and though we cannot have him with us tonight we can feel assured that this celebration is no less pleasing to him. And we can on this occasion take note of what he and his co-workers have accomplished in state and nation. For this is a year of democratic jubilee. A year ago we celebrated victory. Today we celebrate more—we celebrate achievement. A year ago we were glad that the people