

# Mr. Bryan's St. Louis Speech

[From the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, June 16.]

The appearance of William J. Bryan in the hall at the national convention last night was the signal for a spontaneous and hearty greeting from the democrats that did not subside until the Nebraskan had been escorted to the platform for a speech. Bryan was late getting into the hall because of the congestion at the doors, but scarcely had he appeared at the back of the press box when the demonstration began.

As his familiar figure moved forward, the cheers redoubled. The galleries began to cry, "Bryan! Bryan!" and the delegates and alternates took it up, many springing to their feet and waving hats and canes as they yelled.

From all parts of the hall came cries of "speech!" Chairman James restored order for the opening prayer but scarcely had the amen been uttered when there were renewed cries of "Bryan." Chairman James recognized Senator Thompson of Kansas, who moved that the rules be suspended and Mr. Bryan be invited to speak. The motion was wildly cheered and a roar of "aye!" signified that it was carried, although there were scattering "noes."

The crowd continued cheering as a special committee, headed by Senator Kern of Indiana, escorted the Nebraskan to the stand. It was several minutes before the clamor could be quieted. His speech lasted forty-five minutes.

## Text of Mr. Bryan's Address

Mr. Bryan spoke as follows:

Delegates of the convention, ladies and gentlemen:

I appreciate the honor that this convention does me in permitting me to say a word to the delegates and guests assembled. Every democratic national convention is to me a love feast. It gives me an opportunity to meet and renew acquaintance with the men with whom I have been intimately associated in politics for now more than twenty years. And appearing before you tonight, my mind runs back to the campaign of 1896, and to the faces indelibly impressed upon my memory in those trying times. It was then that I became acquainted with the leaders of that mighty host of democracy, whose support in three campaigns I value more than I could value any office in the world.

It was then that I learned to know the distinguished gentleman who presided as temporary chairman of this convention. He gave to that campaign the youthful vigor of a man of promise, and it has been a joy to me to continue that acquaintance so happily begun.

I learned to know twenty years ago the distinguished gentleman who presides as the permanent chairman of the convention. He was then entering public life as a young man, and his is one of the faces I shall never forget as I saw it in that convention at Chicago.

It was twenty years ago that I learned to appreciate the wisdom and the statesmanship of the distinguished senator from Missouri who is the chairman of your resolutions committee.

And so I might go on enumerating the names of these men with whom I was then associated, whose acquaintance I have prized, and whose confidence has awakened a sense of deepest gratitude in my heart.

After sixteen years of struggle together we won a notable victory. After sixteen years of waiting our party entered the White house and, fortunately, we won the senate and the house at the same time. Our party became responsible for the administration of the national government. It was in sole control of executive and legislative departments, and now we come, after three years of labor, to take account of our stock, to make our plans for the future and to submit to the American people the claims of our party to continued confidence.

If I have not mistaken the sentiment of this convention it is different from the convention that I recently attended in a neighboring city. Our people meet today feeling that they have earned and should have the continued confidence of the American people.

Whatever differences of opinion may exist, or may have existed, as to particular measures or particular acts, we are here to begin the fight of 1916, a united party in every state in the Union, ready for battle.

The democratic party encourages independent thought among its members. If they all thought alike it would be proof conclusive that they did not think at all.

Parties exist because parties emphasize the points of difference. Harmony exists in parties because the members emphasize the points of agreement rather than the points of difference. And, as in this nation, the things that the whole people hold in common are more numerous and more important than the things on which they differ, so in parties men act together when the things upon which they agree are more numerous or more important than the things upon which they differ. Today those who stand for the democratic party are able to go before this nation and not only give a reason for the faith that is in them, but they can defend the administration's claims to the confidence of the people.

In dealing with the domestic problems, our President, our senate and our house have joined together in giving the country a program of constructive legislation that has no parallel in all the history of this country.

You may take all the administrations from the beginning of our history as a republic to the beginning of the present one, and you will not find as many laws written upon the statute books, of great importance to the people as you will find written in the last three years by Woodrow Wilson and a democratic congress.

We found the republican party in power, with a tariff law written by the beneficiaries of protection. The President called congress together as soon as it could be assembled. He presented the pledge of our platform to reduce the tariff, and the members of our party, co-operating as the President and congress have seldom co-operated before, redeemed the pledge and wrote upon the statute books the best tariff law that we have had in this country in 50 years.

It has taken away the power of the trusts to exploit the American people. It has done justice to the consumers of the country, without doing injustice to any of the producers who have relied upon the favors granted by the republican party. And, as a part of that tariff law, the country now enjoys an income tax that has relieved those who have borne an unfair share of the burden and placed it upon those whose incomes properly justified it, and who have heretofore escaped their share of the expense of the government.

As soon as the tariff question had been settled the President asked congress to give consideration to the question of currency reform. For twenty years the republican party had advocated currency reform. It had admitted the need of currency reform, but it never had the courage to undertake currency reform.

The democratic party, true to its promise and its pledge, prepared a bill, and that bill is now a law, thanks to the courage of a President who was not afraid of Wall street.

No president since Jackson has had to meet such an unholy combination of the powers of high finance, and even Jackson himself never met the situation better than Woodrow Wilson has met it. We have just commenced to learn what that law means for this nation. Even before it became a law we learned what it meant to have the White house on the side of the people.

An attempt was being made to create a panic for the purpose of compelling the abandonment of this proposed legislation. When the evidence, as it came in from different sections of the country, was sufficient, the secretary of the treasury went to the White house—and I want to call your attention to the fact that he went to the WHITE HOUSE and not to the kings of Wall street as republican secretaries had been in the habit of doing—and after a brief conference with the Executive he gave a statement to the public announcing that, if any community anywhere needed money to tide it over a temporary embarrassment, it need not go to Wall street, but could come to Washington, that the government stood for all the people and was ready to protect them.

What was the result? The result was that that proposed panic was nipped in the bud. "It folded its tent like the Arab and silently stole away," and since that time no new panics have been born.

This great piece of legislation, the greatest piece of constructive statesmanship in a genera-

tion, has not only broken the hold of Wall street upon the business of the nation, but it has broken the grip of Wall street upon the politics of the United States. For twenty years there had not been an election but what a hundred men in Wall street could, by the coercion they had in their power, change the result of the election. And one who, like myself, has felt their power, must be pardoned if he rejoices that we have an administration that has broken that power and set a nation free.

That currency law restored to the government the sovereign right to issue the paper money of the country. The banking institutions had filched that power from the government, and having learned the value of its use they claimed it as a vested privilege. But the democratic party, acting through a democratic President, a democratic senate and a democratic house, has restored to the government the power that had been taken from it. It is one of the victories of this administration.

When the work was completed along this line the President invited congress to a third task, the task of putting the ax to the root of the tree of private monopoly. The republican party and the progressive party had talked of regulating monopolies, but instead of regulating them they allowed the men who furnished their campaign funds to regulate the regulators of monopoly, and the trusts grew, and grew and grew.

But, when President Wilson sent his message to congress he planted himself upon the democratic doctrine, proclaimed in four campaigns, that a private monopoly is indefensible and intolerable.

Here are three great measures, measures carrying out the promises of a democratic platform, and these three great measures constitute a record of achievement which the republican party dare not attack.

In their indictment of our party they did not dare to mention three of the four measures that characterize the economic policy of this administration. Did you see in their platform any denunciation of the currency law? No. They have not the courage to either admit its value or condemn the law. They cowardly evade the issue, but what they can do at Chicago is one thing; what they can do before the country is an entirely different thing.

The electorate before which the republican party must now go is not controlled as the convention at Chicago was by the expert representatives of the favor-seeking corporations. They must meet the issue, and if they can not find fault with our currency law they must admit that the democratic party that they used to ridicule has both the intelligence and the courage to do what they, either from lack of knowledge or lack of courage, failed to do.

Did they condemn the income tax at Chicago? No; and they will have the people to settle with if they dare go before them and propose to undo what the democratic party has done, and put back upon their bended backs the load they carried, and would carry still, if the republican party had remained in power. It never would have broken their bondage, but now they are free. They dare not put it back. We dare them to propose to put it back!

They either did not know how to rid the country of the burden of private monopoly, or, if they knew, they did not dare to put their knowledge into effect. Why don't they denounce our anti-trust legislation? They must either go before the country and point out the defects of these anti-trust laws, or they must admit before the voters that our party dared to do what they did not dare to undertake.

These are some of the things that they have not challenged and that they will not challenge.

They talk about the tariff. Yes, but it is a matter of habit. It is momentum that keeps high tariff going. The astronomers tell us that some stars are so far away that if they ceased to shine the world would not find it out for centuries afterwards; so the republicans had given to the advocacy of a high tariff a momentum that will carry the doctrine on after it is dead as an issue. What we now see is not new power that is added, it is the dying power that was put into it before the people secured tariff reform.

But there is one argument that they used to make that they can make no longer. Banking upon lack of information among their voters, they used to accuse the democrats of bringing panics when they were in power. They overlooked the fact that of the three panics that have come since the republican party came into