

Echoes of the St. Louis Convention

BRYAN AN IDOL OF CONVENTION

[From Bloomington, Ill., Bulletin, June 23.]

A reporter for the Bulletin called on former Congressman FitzHenry today and asked him if it was true that the great commoner, William Jennings Bryan sat in the recent democratic national convention at St. Louis unnoticed, as described in the press reports, and in discussing this subject, Mr. FitzHenry said:

"It is very difficult to understand how such a report could have gained currency. Of course, Mr. Bryan came to St. Louis unannounced and came in a professional capacity, but wherever he went he was seen surrounded by friends and was most enthusiastically greeted. At least upon three occasions it looked as though he might have controlled the convention if it had been his desire to do so.

"When the great convention opened, Mr. Bryan came into the section of the hall reserved for newspaper men and sat down near the railing. The greeting accorded, I thought, was exceedingly enthusiastic. There was a constant stream of delegates and alternates to the part of the floor where he was located, and this show of personal affection continued until Chairman McCombs let the big gavel fall, bringing the convention to order.

CALLS FOR BRYAN

"Governor Glynn of New York was then introduced and began his masterful keynote speech. The fascinated multitude were quiet until the first indirect allusion to President Wilson was made, then a perfect storm of applause broke loose and continued for several minutes, during which time it was a very common thing to hear from all over the floor 'Bryan, Bryan Bryan!' When Governor Glynn reached the climax of his effort, the cheering again was intermingled with calls for Bryan, and when the governor had finished, the cheering of the convention resolved itself almost into a Bryan demonstration.

"When the formal business of the convention following Governor Glynn's address on Wednesday, was finished, the convention adjourned to meet at 11:00 o'clock Thursday morning. When Governor Glynn called the convention to order Thursday morning the report of the committee on permanent organization, making Senator Ollie James permanent chairman was adopted, the governor introduced Senator James and the convention was treated to one of Ollie James' peculiar and very interesting characteristic speeches. At the mention of President Wilson's name the convention went to a 45-minute demonstration. Mr. Bryan's name was again called freely and vehemently. When Senator James concluded his speech a perfect storm of 'Bryan, Bryan, Bryan!' broke loose in the convention again and for about five minutes the great commoner sat in his seat with his face flushed, while Senator James wielded the gavel in an effort to quiet the convention. He was not successful, however, until the great audience noticed Mr. Bryan get up and walk out of the press gallery, then the sound of the gavel upon the chairman's table could be heard and finally Senator James requested that the convention proceed with its business, as the delegates would have an opportunity to hear from Mr. Bryan before the convention closed. With this request on the part of the chairman and the consciousness of the crowds that the great commoner was not in the hall, the convention was able to proceed. A short time after this incident and the hearing of the reports from the several committees, the convention adjourned to meet at 9 o'clock in the evening.

"When that hour came Thursday night the hall was literally jammed full of people and 10,000 more on the outside scrambled, good naturedly, for admission, but the doors had been closed by the chief door-keeper. Before the crowd would permit the convention to proceed with its business the cries of 'Bryan; Bryan; Bryan!' brought him to the speaker's stand and he delivered the great speech which cemented the democrats of the nation into one solid phalanx to support the President. After Mr. Bryan concluded his speech the convention proceeded to nominate Wilson and Marshall and finished its effort for the day about midnight, adjourning until 11 o'clock Friday morning.

BRYAN HAD TO LEAVE HALL

"When the convention reassembled for its final session Friday morning and was getting

well under way, the cry of 'Bryan; Bryan; Bryan!' again filled the great hall and it did not subside until the convention noticed Mr. Bryan get up from his seat and walk down through the journalistic section to one of the exits of the hall, then the convention proceeded to its business.

"No such a demonstration was accorded any other person in the convention hall. Indeed there is no other democrat in the United States whose mere presence as a spectator would have been as noticeable and produced the spontaneous outburst of enthusiasm such as that of Mr. Bryan's except President Wilson's himself.

"The disagreement between the President and Mr. Bryan as to the government's foreign policy has caused many people to feel that there was a possibility of a break in the solid democratic organization in the impending campaign. However, nobody who attended that convention was better pleased with its great work than was Mr. Bryan, and I believe it is safe to say that no democrat in the United States will support the nominees of the convention more wholeheartedly than will Mr. Bryan.

"Of course everybody knew that President Wilson was to be nominated and that a strong patriotic American platform approving the constructive work of the present administration would be adopted. Consequently the real feature of the great St. Louis convention was the keynote speech of Governor Glynn of New York.

"Governor Glynn is a young man, of small stature, keen eye, smiling face and a strong, musical voice. His speech, of course, was a prepared speech; his thoughts were well rounded out, consecutively arranged, and his delivery was fascinating. His speech is absolutely unanswerable and there is scarcely an American citizen who could have heard it and then been against Woodrow Wilson for re-election, except for selfish reasons.

"It is a complete and satisfactory answer to all of the calumnies which have been spoken, the bogeymen who have been created and the misrepresentations which have been made concerning President Wilson and his administration."

BRYAN STILL HOLDS AFFECTIONS OF THE PEOPLE

[By Dwight H. Brown, in Poplar Bluff, Mo., Citizen-Democrat, June 22.]

That Col. William J. Bryan still is cherished as one of the world's greatest citizens and America's greatest democrat and occupies a warm spot in the hearts of his countrymen generally, has been established possibly to the satisfaction of all. To say the least of it, it should be. The convention in St. Louis last week was a triumph in every respect, and recorded the victory for the party in November. To one who has continually respected the greatness of Colonel Bryan, it was particularly gratifying, for it showed where the great commoner stands with the American people, and says to the writer that perhaps yet the dream of him as president of the United States is possible.

The metropolitan press has been unfair with him and the public is not permitted to know facts always. There were many eastern papers that even reported him running for office on other tickets than the democratic, and his views on international affairs have been so misrepresented that correction should be unnecessary among fair and honest Americans in whose veins good red blood flows. The attitude of the convention to Bryan has not been fully narrated, and we just want to say here that it was a stupendous ovation for him from the first curtain until the final. In fact, the "pep and ginger" to borrow baseball terms, didn't show up until the commoner delivered a great address, which commanded the attention of 15,000 people so that the dropping of a pin could be heard save when the mass of people roared their praises and approval. Bryan was the one big figure in the democratic convention even though professional politicians of Nebraska and interests not only of a state but national scale, defeated him for delegate from his state, and he entered the convention hall only as a correspondent for a press association and the editor of a great political paper and took his place among newspaper men. The convention's eye was fixed on the section of the Fourth Estate. From that section the Nebraskan wielded more influence multiplied by many numerals than did all of the combined influences

that defeated him as a delegate and put him in the press box. His name will live and be revered by Americans and the democrats of the world centuries after his feeble opponents have passed into oblivion.

This paper took a very firm stand for Bryan when he was under fire for refusing to follow a course in public office that disagreed with his life teaching. He felt that he was right in his course and we believed the democracy and the nation would so regard him later on. His vindication comes in the grand ovation in St. Louis.

We are going to elect the present eminent incumbent of the White House and carry out the unfinished part of the program of the democracy and four years from now the party might do no better than turn to that one whose governmental philosophy and teaching from 1896 to date has contributed more to the final democratic success than any other influence.

As to how Mr. Bryan would deal with the St. Louis convention, we were confident for we had his word. Recently while attending the Journalism Week of the Missouri university at Columbia in receiving an introduction to W. Midzuno, representative of the Osaka Mainichi of Osaka, Japan, at the hand of Mr. Bryan, the writer recognizing the journalist from the sunrise empire as an admirer of the American Commoner remarked during the conversation, "It has for years been my dream to see this man president of our republic." The journalist concurred, while the Commoner smiled with satisfaction, but remarked, "There is but one man now." "That is true," said I, "but you are still young and there is an election just four years off." More smiles and Bryan continued, "You know I have been close to that office and it is not so much to be desired after all." The conversation turned and during its course it was apparent that the Commoner had discovered that the occupants of the White house have to battle tremendous influences in safeguarding the interests of the people. Bryan is a democrat, if there are any, and the achievements of the present administration point conclusively and convincingly to administration at the hands of the democracy. Those who have impugned his acts, his purposes and his recent policies have only lessened self and magnified the one criticised.

Bryan goes home from the convention in the capacity of a reporter with the plaudits of his people upon him and brighter burning fires of love and admiration in the hearts of patriots than ever. He is a man of service, and his greatest reward and his greatest joy come from serving his nation and his people. He is the American hero of peace, who has fought more battles and won them, bringing greater liberty and greater happiness to his people than any warrior of modern times. He drew the blue prints and outlined the campaign for years and when the command was given to his friend and comrade, Woodrow Wilson, the battle was won.

WILLIAM J. BRYAN STANDS FORTH AS GREAT MORAL CRUSADER

Maurice B. Judd, of The Indianapolis News, sent the following staff correspondence under a St. Louis date of June 16:

"The most interesting figure at the St. Louis convention is William Jennings Bryan. He has been here as a private citizen, a reporter for a newspaper syndicate, and has been only a spectator. Comparatively few of the crowd's cheers have been for him. He has been little photographed and seldom interviewed. He does not appear a great deal in the hotel corridors. His power seems to have waned for the time being; he is no longer the Peerless Leader. He is a private citizen, now and probably for the rest of his days.

"Yet there is no close observer of Bryan's career who could rightly say that he is done. He will never hold public office again in all probability, but he is not done. No one who sat in the press section at the two conventions and watched Mr. Bryan for several days, noting the eternal light of moral righteousness in his face and the fire of a hope that will last as long as the man, could say that Mr. Bryan is done. There is too much strength of character in that face; too much of the kind of stuff that the Christian martyrs must have been made of in the days of the Roman empire; too much knowledge that right makes might and too much of the feeling that though a man may be beaten, his cause, if it is right, will never die.

STILL RETAINS HOLD

"Mr. Bryan, despite the unfortunate circumstances of some of his most recent public actions, still retains a hold on the American people. Probably it would not be right to say the whole