

Mr. Bryan in Toronto

Toronto, Canada, March 4, 1918.—Hon. Col. Bryan, Lincoln, Neb. Dear Col. Bryan: I sent you on Saturday, copies of the morning papers, in which you will notice that your speeches at both the Metropolitan Church and Massey hall are given in full. These are the representative papers of Toronto.

Our best citizens were represented by the immense gatherings at both places and regret exceedingly the indignity to which you were subjected at the Massey hall meeting. I see the "Toronto World" states that there were only thirty returned soldiers responsible for the trouble, which makes the representation about one-half of one per cent of the two audiences. It is estimated that there were thirty-five hundred to four thousand people present at Massey hall and about twenty-five hundred at the Metropolitan Church. Thousands of people went away and could not gain admittance.

Personally, I do not think you need feel discouraged over the disturbance at Massey hall. I am sending you herewith a clipping from this morning's "Mail & Empire" which shows you that a company of these returned soldiers waited on the prime minister of the province on Saturday afternoon and practically handed to him the same treatment that you received. You will be interested in noticing from the newspaper report, however, that Sir William Hearst told these people that there was absolutely no hope for a return to liquor conditions in this province.

Wishing you every success.

Yours very truly,

JAMES ACTON.

President and General Manager Trade Journal

THE MASSEY HALL MEETING

A Toronto, Ontario, dispatch, dated March 1, says: William Jennings Bryan was refused a hearing when he appeared at Massey hall here last night to address a prohibition meeting under the auspices of the Dominion Alliance.

Returned soldiers caused the disturbance by shouting various epithets. "What about the Lusitania?" they also demanded in chorus.

The first disturbance came before Mr. Bryan's entry, when the chairman told the audience they were to be honored by listening to the fraternal delegate of the Anti-Saloon League of America, "one of the foremost citizens of our ally."

The chairman refrained from mentioning Mr. Bryan's name as long as he could, but when it came out at last it was greeted by a chorus of cat calls and cries: "We don't want him!"

The chairman appealed to the audience. It was not a good thing for the city they were doing, he said, and "a bad thing for the cause we represent."

Then Mr. Bryan came in and pandemonium broke loose. Most of the audience stood up, waved handkerchiefs and cheered him, but the answering hoots from the gallery outlasted the cheers.

For five minutes Mr. Bryan tried to make himself heard, but it was no use. The interruption kept right on and the interrupters sang "Rule, Britannia," forcing the audience to join in that, and "God Save the King."

They inquired about the Lusitania and sang "Over There" and "We Won't Go Home 'Till Morning."

Men stood up and shook their fists at the former secretary of state. Soldiers showed the service buttons on their coats and shouted defiance at those who pleaded to give the visitor a hearing.

Enthusiastic prohibitionists who wished to hear Mr. Bryan, hurled across the hall counter calls of "Put them out!" and "Where's your fair play?"

The chairman was heard to say something about ejecting the interrupters. He was greeted with cries of "Who's going to do it?"

Mr. Bryan took his seat. John H. Roberts of Montreal made an attempt to speak, but he was told to "get the khaki on."

Then a man of the army medical corps dressed in uniform was hoisted on the platform.

"Boys, they are fighting for freedom at the front; they are also fighting for freedom of thought. Why should we interrupt the meeting?" he appealed to the gallery.

The appeal was in vain. "God Save the King"

was sung again, and the soldiers in the gallery shouted, "Take Bryan out and we will walk out. We'll let any man speak, but not a pro-German."

After the band had played another air Mr. Bryan made a brief but futile attempt to make himself heard. Then he took a chair to the edge of the platform and talked to the reporters, the noise never ceasing for an instant.

"I am here by invitation," Mr. Bryan said. "I come as the representative of 25,000,000 of the American people who have banded themselves together in various organizations for the promotion of prohibition."

"I find that less than 5 per cent, probably more nearly less than 2 per cent, of this audience refuses to allow the res' of the audience to hear me speak."

"In this case I am not willing that force should be used to eject the men from the hall. I would rather that the meeting should break up."

"My patriotism is satisfactory to the President of the United States; it is satisfactory to the cabinet of the United States; it is satisfactory to the congress of the United States. There is not a single person in the United States who can say that one drop of blood in my veins is not loyal to my country."

Mr. Bryan announced his readiness to stay all night in the hall and try to talk to the people. He said he would have no coercion, however.

"Enough men," he added, "are being injured in our fighting to make the world safe for democracy without anyone being injured to give me a hearing."

QUOTES BIBLE AS REBUKE TO TORONTO CROWD

[From the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, March 2.]

William Jennings Bryan spent today in St. Louis.

To reporters who questioned him about the incident of Thursday night at Toronto, Canada, when he was hooted and prevented from speaking to a crowd of 5,000 persons by former soldiers who cried "Remember the Lusitania," and shouted "pro-German," Bryan gave Biblical quotations to express his forbearance and explain the causes of the demonstration.

Mr. Bryan said that the opposition to him had been fostered by two newspapers whose columns contained liquor advertisements, but who professed to see other reasons than that he was a prohibition speaker to oppose his coming to their city.

"The fact that the former soldiers gave other reasons than their opposition to prohibition for their demonstration is not conclusive," he said, "because the newspapers also gave other reasons, following the example of Demetrius, the silversmith, who appealed to his craft to oppose Paul. The silversmiths, however, did not shout their real reason for opposing Paul, but shouted 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians.'"

The Biblical reference of Mr. Bryan was from The Acts 19:23-28, which reads as follows:

"And about that time there arose a great stir concerning the Way.

"For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines to Diana, brought no little profit unto the craftsmen; whom he gathered together with the workmen of like occupation and said: 'Sirs, ye know that by this business we have wealth.

"And ye see and hear that this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying there are no gods that are made by hand, and not only is there danger that this our trade come into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana be made of no account."

"And when they heard this they were filled with wrath and cried out, saying: 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians.'"

SLAMS THE NEWSPAPERS

"The publicity given the incident illustrates one of the faults of the newspapers," Bryan said. "They deal with the exception rather than the rule. They give space to assault and battery cases but have not room for the names of those who live in peace. They give space to divorces but ignore the happy families. 'There is more rejoicing over the lamb that has strayed and is found than the 90 and 9 within the fold,' he paraphrased.

"So with the Toronto incident. They give lots of space to sixty-five persons who did not want to hear and do not mention 5,000 who wanted to hear. Less than 2 per cent of the

audience joined in the demonstration while the rest, so far as could be seen, were not only anxious to hear but wanted to eject the disturbers.

"I doubt if ever I have spoken to so large an audience with so few prejudiced against me in it.

"Among United States audiences, opposition to a speaker is not as likely to manifest itself as in a British audience, where opponents engage in what they call 'heckling' more than they do here. Public men of great Britain and Canada occasionally meet with this experience.

"Then it must be remembered that the sixty-five—that was the number as counted by one of the men on the stage—represented but a small percentage of the number of returned soldiers in Toronto. I inquired and was told they had 2,000 or 3,000 returned soldiers there.

"I take it for granted that the men who disturbed the meeting were returned soldiers, because I was told they were, although they wore no uniforms.

SAVED HIS HECKLERS.

"The presiding officer at the meeting in Toronto was a former mayor of the city. He threatened the disturbers with the police but I objected to that, and asked that no effort be made to remove the men. I feared that any attempt to remove the 65 men from the hall would result in injury to someone, and that the removal of ex-soldiers especially, should anyone be hurt, would do the cause more harm than my speech would do good. I stated to newspapermen at that meeting that enough people had been injured in our fight to make democracy safe and that I was not willing for any addition to be made to that number to secure me a hearing.

"This meeting was only one out of three at which I spoke. The other two were largely attended and I was welcomed with cheers. My evening audience to which I spoke before going to the meeting at which the disturbance took place, was one of the most enthusiastic I ever have addressed."

WINE FOR SOLDIERS.

Asked whether he approved of our soldiers in France drinking light wines, such as they are said to have served them, Bryan said:

"Our government was entirely right in the attitude it took in regard to liquor not being sold our soldiers. Our Allies ought to carry out our wishes as far as our soldiers are concerned, regardless of what they do with their soldiers."

Mr. Bryan declared that when the prohibition bill first was submitted by congress, he had predicted that three years would be required to gain the necessary two-thirds of the states to its support. He said today that subsequent events had caused him to revise his prediction and that now it appeared that the prohibition movement would come to victory within two years.

In his toll of the states which he said would ratify the amendment he gave Missouri. He declared that St. Louis' wet vote could not offset the rest of the state's dry vote.

"What about hope in St. Louis?" he was asked.

Once more he broke into quotation: "While the lamp holds out to burn The vilest sinner will return."

BRYAN AND BEECHER

Mr. Bryan won no such victory over a partly hostile audience at Toronto as Henry Ward Beecher did in England when he was urging the cause of the Union in a community strongly in favor of the South. But he has no reason to feel ashamed of the manner in which he carried the situation off. His good humor, his refusal to allow the disturbers to be ejected on his account, and his delivery of his speech finally to the very limited number near enough to hear him above the chorus of catcalls and hisses, certainly made the best of an awkward situation.

The center of the disturbance was about sixty returned Canadian soldiers who were determined to keep him from being heard. The vast majority of the audience was apparently quite willing to hear the visitor. But the returned soldiers had evidently made up their minds that he was a pacifist; that he was a pro-German and possibly a few other things, and would have none of him. All of which illustrates the fact that even in the case of near neighbors there is likely to be a lot of misunderstanding and hasty conclusions as to those across the line.

No matter what Mr. Bryan's views might