

MR. BRYAN'S SPEECH BEFORE THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

Mr. Bryan's speech before the Inter-parliamentary Union at London, July 26, 1906, was as follows:

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Inter-parliamentary Union: I regret that I can not speak to you in the language which is usually employed in this body, but I only know one language, the language of my own country, and you will pardon me if I use that. I desire in the first place to express my appreciation of the courtesy shown me by Lord Weardale, our president, and by Baron von Plener, the chairman of the committee which framed the model treaty. The latter has framed this substitute embodying both of the ideas (investigation and mediation) which were presented yesterday. I appreciate the superior wisdom and the greater experience of this learned committee which has united the two propositions and I thank this body also for the opportunity to say just a word in defense of my part of the resolution. I can not say that it is a new idea, for since it was presented yesterday I have learned that the same idea in substance was presented last year at Brussels by Mr. Bartholdt, of my own country, who has been so conspicuous in his efforts to promote peace, and I am very glad that I can follow in his footsteps in the urging of this amendment. I may add also that it is in line with the suggestion made by the honorable prime minister of Great Britain, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, in that memorable and epoch-making speech of yesterday, in that speech which contained several sentences anyone of which would have justified the assembling of this Inter-parliamentary Union—anyone of which would have compensated us all for coming here. In that splendid speech he expressed the hope that the scope of arbitration treaties may be enlarged. He said:

"Gentlemen, I fervently trust that before long the principle of arbitration may win such confidence as to justify its extension to a wider field of international differences. We have already seen how questions arousing passion and excitement have attained a solution, not necessarily by means of arbitration in the strict sense of the word, but by referring them to such a tribunal as that which reported on the North Sea incident; and I would ask you whether it may not be worth while carefully to consider, before the next congress meets at The Hague, the various forms in which differences might be submitted, with a view to opening the door as wide as possible to every means which might in any degree contribute to moderate or compose such differences."

This amendment is in harmony with this suggestion. The resolution is in the form of a postscript to the treaty, but like the postscripts of some letters it contains a very vital subject—in fact, I am not sure but the postscript in this case is as important as the letter itself, for it deals with those questions which have defied arbitration. Certain questions affecting the honor or integrity of a nation are considered outside of the jurisdiction of a court of arbitration, and these are the questions which have given trouble. Passion is not often aroused by questions that do

not affect a nation's integrity or honor, but for fear these questions may arise arbitration is not always employed where it might be. The first advantage, then, of this resolution is that it secures an investigation of the facts, and if you can but separate the facts from the question of honor, the chances are 100 to 1 that you can settle both the fact and the question of honor with out war. There is, therefore, a great advantage in an investigation that brings out the facts, for disputed facts between nations, as between friends, are the cause of most disagreements.

The second advantage of this investigation is that it gives time for calm consideration. That has already been well presented by the gentleman who has preceded me, Baron von Plener. I need not say to you that man excited is a very different animal from man calm, and that questions ought to be settled not by passion, but by deliberation. If this resolution would do nothing else but give time for reflection and deliberation, there would be sufficient reason for its adoption. If we can but stay the hand of war until conscience can assert itself, war will be made more remote. When men are mad they swagger around and tell what they can do; when they are calm they consider what they ought to do.

The third advantage of this investigation is that it gives opportunity to mobilize public opinion for the compelling of a peaceful settlement and that is an advantage not to be overlooked. Public opinion is coming to be more and more a power in the world. One of the greatest statesmen of my country—Thomas Jefferson, and if it would not offend I would say I believe him to be the greatest statesman the world has produced—said that if he had to choose between a government without newspapers and newspapers without a government he would rather risk the newspapers without a government. You may call it an extravagant statement, and yet it presents an idea, and that idea is that public opinion is a controlling force. I am glad that the time is coming when public opinion is to be more and more powerful; glad that the time is coming when the moral sentiment of one nation will influence the action of other nations; glad that the time is coming when the world will realize that a war between two nations affects others than the nations involved; glad that the time is coming when the world will insist that nations settle their differences by some peaceful means. If time is given for the marshalling of the force of public opinion peace will be promoted. This resolution is presented, therefore, for the reasons that it gives an opportunity to investigate the facts, and to separate them from the question of honor, that it gives time for the calming of passion, and that it gives time for the formation of a controlling public sentiment.

I will not disguise the fact that I consider this resolution a long step in the direction of peace, nor will I disguise the fact that I am here because I want this Inter-parliamentary Union to take just as long a step as possible in the direction of universal peace. We meet in a famous hall, and looking down upon us from these walls are pictures that illustrate not only the glory that is to be won in war, but the horrors that follow war. There is a picture of one of the great figures in English history, (pointing to

the fresco by Maclise of the death of Nelson). Lord Nelson is represented as dying, and around him are the mangled forms of others. I understand that war brings out certain virtues. I am aware that it gives opportunity for the display of great patriotism; I am aware that the example of men who give their lives for their country is inspiring; but I venture to say there is as much inspiration in a noble life as there is in a heroic death, and I trust that one of the results of this Inter-parliamentary-Union will be to emphasize the doctrine that a life devoted to the public, and ever flowing, like a spring, with good, exerts an influence upon the human race and upon the destiny of the world as great as any death in war. And if you will permit me to mention one whose career I watched with interest and whose name I revere, I will say that, in my humble judgment, the sixty-four years of spotless public service of William Ewart Gladstone will, in years to come, be regarded as as rich an ornament to the history of this nation as the life of any man who poured out his blood upon a battlefield.

All movements in the interest of peace have back of them the idea of brotherhood. If peace is to come in this world, it will come because people more and more clearly recognize the indissoluble tie that binds each human being to every other. If we are to build permanent peace it must be on the foundation of the brotherhood of men. A poet has described how in the civil war that divided our country into two hostile camps a generation ago—in one battle a soldier in one line thrust his bayonet through a soldier in the opposing line, and how, when he stooped to draw it out, he recognized in the face of the fallen one, the face of his brother. And then the poet describes the feeling of horror that overwhelmed the survivor when he realized that he had taken the life of one who was the child of the same parents and the companion of his boyhood. It was a pathetic story, but is it too much to hope that as years go by we will begin to understand that the whole human race is but a larger family?

It is not too much to hope that as years go by human sympathy will expand until this feeling of unity will not be confined to the members of a family or to the members of a clan or of a community or state but shall be world-wide. It is not too much to hope that we, in this assembly, possibly by this resolution, may hasten the day when we shall feel so appalled at the thought of the taking of any human life that we shall strive to raise all questions to a level where the settlement will be by reason and not by force.

At the conclusion of Mr. Bryan's speech the amended resolution was unanimously adopted. It reads as follows:

"If a disagreement should arise between the contracting parties which is not one to be submitted to arbitration, they shall not resort to any act of hostility before they, separately or jointly, invite, as the case may necessitate, the formation of an international commission of inquiry or the mediation of one or more friendly powers. This requisition will take place, if necessary, according to Article VIII of The Hague convention for the peaceful settlement of international conflicts."

European Newspapers And The Peace Amendment

Extracts from European newspaper comments on Mr. Bryan's address before the Inter-parliamentary Union at London, follow:

The Westminster Gazette, in its issue of July 25, says: "We need not say that we have the utmost sympathy with the sentiments expressed by Mr. Bryan in his speech to the inter-parliamentary conference yesterday. A great step would, indeed, be taken towards securing the peace of the world if it could be laid down as a general principle that nations in controversy with each other should not have recourse to hostilities before having jointly or separately demanded an international commission of inquiry or the mediation of a friendly power. That, as Mr. Bryan said, would at least give a delay in which passions might cool and the public opinion favorable to peace be mobilized. Nor is it altogether a hopeless ideal, as our own experience in the North Sea incident has shown. But the practi-

cal difficulty is that, while the peace parties are concentrating on this proposal for delay, the military experts are more and more agreeing together on the immense advantages of snatching the initiative in case of war. Attacks before a declaration of war are now the theme of military and naval essayists, and, unless we can interpose some definite veto of international law, the tendency will be to rush rather than to delay hostilities, and the power which hangs back at the critical moment, in order to invoke arbitration, may be exposed to a heavy penalty for its virtue. By all means let the peace parties continue to preach patience and conciliation, but let them also as practical men take note of this contrary drift of military and naval opinion, and see whether it can not be checked by international law."

The Evening Standard and St. James Gazette of July 25, says: "Mr. Bryan's speech made

a great impression on the inter-parliamentary conference. It was not only eloquent but it shadowed forth a high ideal and speeches with that dual attribute are sure to touch the imaginations of men. In stating the case for arbitration among nations from the loftiest point of view—stating it, moreover, in silver speech—Mr. Bryan aroused in his hearers a momentary enthusiasm for the brotherhood of man and the cause of universal peace. Seeing that that was the effect of his words, we regret his audience was limited. For the cause is one which can well be served by inspiring eloquence, and until the inspiration of peace touches the heart of mankind, the progress of arbitration will be hampered."

The Standard of July 25 says: "If we are to build permanent peace, it must be on the brotherhood of man!" These words were addressed yesterday to the peace congress meeting