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WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

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The Seventeenth Amendment

Accomplishment of the Most Important Reform That Has Been Made in a Century Affecting Methods of the Federal Government

At 11 o'clock a. m., on the 31st of May, 1913, the secretary of state signed the proclamation announcing the ratification of the seventeenth amendment to the constitution of the United States, providing for the election of United States senators by the direct vote of the people.

There were present, by special invitation, ex-Congressman Harry St. George Tucker, of Virginia, who was chairman of the committee of the Fifty-second congress having in charge the first resolution which ever passed the house of representatives providing for the popular election of senators, Congressman William W. Rucker, of Missouri, chairman of the committee of the Sixty-second congress having in charge the resolution which submitted the present amendment, and Senator William E. Borah, of Idaho, chairman of the senate committee, having in charge the resolution submitting this amendment.

In anticipation of the event, Mr. Bryan had provided four pens, which were used and disposed of as follows:

The first was used to sign the first part of his name, "William," and delivered as a souvenir to ex-Congressman Tucker; the second was used to sign the second part of his name, "Jennings," and delivered to Congressman Rucker; the third, which was used for signing the last part of his name, "Bryan," was kept by himself; the fourth was used for writing in the date, "thirty-first," and was delivered to Senator Borah.

To those present, Mr. Bryan expressed his gratification that the making of this official announcement of the ratification of the amendment had fallen to him as one of his official duties. He also pointed out the fact that the short time required for the ratification of the amendment proved that the sentiment in favor of it was practically unanimous. He was elected to congress in 1890 upon a platform containing the following plank:

"We favor an amendment to the federal constitution which will take the election of the United States senators from the state legislatures and place it in the hands of the people, where it belongs."

He voted in both the Fifty-second and Fifty-

third congresses for the resolution submitting an amendment similar to that which has just been ratified, and he has assisted in the writing of four national platforms which indorsed this amendment, the platform of 1908 speaking of it as "the gateway to other reforms" and the platform of 1912 urging its ratification by the states. He regards it as the most important reform that has been made in a century affecting methods of the federal government, and he believes that a senate chosen by the people, and thus made responsive to the people's will, instead of degenerating, will improve in character while it increases in influence. A senate chosen directly by the people can speak with greater authority and thus wield greater power than a senate selected indirectly through state legislatures.

THE SEVENTEENTH AMENDMENT

"William Jennings Bryan, secretary of state of the United States of America—To all to whom these presents may come, greeting: Know ye that, the congress of the United States at the second session, Sixty-second congress, in the year one thousand nine hundred and twelve, passed a resolution in the words and figures following: to-wit—

"JOINT RESOLUTION

Proposing an amendment to the constitution providing that senators shall be elected by the people of the several states.

"Resolved, by the senate and house of representatives of the United States of America in congress assembled (two-thirds of each house concurring therein), That in lieu of the first paragraph of section three of article I of the constitution of the United States, and in lieu of so much of paragraph two of the same section as relates to the filling of vacancies, the following be proposed as an amendment to the constitution, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the constitution when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the states:

"The senate of the United States shall be composed of two senators from each state, elected by the people thereof, for six years, and each senator shall have one vote. The electors in each state shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the state legislatures.

"When vacancies happen in the representation of any state in the senate, the executive authority of such state shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies: Provided, That the legislature of any state may empower the executive thereof to make temporary appointment until the people fill the vacancies by election as the legislature may direct.

"This amendment shall not be so construed as to affect the election or term of any senator chosen before it becomes valid as part of the constitution."

"And, further, that it appears from official documents on file in this department that the

amendment to the constitution of the United States proposed as aforesaid has been ratified by the legislatures of the states of Massachusetts, Arizona, Minnesota, New York, Kansas, Oregon, North Carolina, California, Michigan, Idaho, West Virginia, Nebraska, Iowa, Montana, Texas, Washington, Wyoming, Colorado, Illinois, North Dakota, Nevada, Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Ohio, South Dakota, Indiana, Missouri, New Mexico, New Jersey, Tennessee, Arkansas, Connecticut, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

"And, further, that the states whose legislatures have so ratified the said proposed amendment, constitute three-fourths of the whole number of states in the United States.

"Now, therefore, be it known that I, William Jennings Bryan, secretary of state of the United States, by virtue and in pursuance of section 205 of the revised statutes of the United States, do hereby certify that the amendment aforesaid has become valid to all intents and purposes as a part of the constitution of the United States.

"In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the department of state to be affixed.

"Done at the city of Washington this thirty-first day of May in the year of our Lord, one thousand nine hundred and thirteen, and of the independence of the United States of America the one hundred and thirty-seventh. (Signed) "WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN."

PEACE APPROACHING

It will be remembered that about a month ago a plan was, by the president's direction, submitted to all the governments having representatives here, the plan being in substance, as follows:

First, that the United States is prepared to enter into an agreement with each and every country severally providing for the investigation of all disputes of every character and nature by an international commission, the contracting parties agreeing not to declare war or begin hostilities until such investigation is made and report submitted; second, the investigation to be conducted as a matter of course, upon the initiative of the commission, without the formality of a request from either party; third, the report to be submitted within a given time, the time to be agreed upon; fourth, the parties to reserve the right to act independently on the subject matter in dispute, after the report is submitted. The composition of the commission was a matter of detail to be agreed upon by the contracting parties, the time, also, in which the report should be submitted was a matter of detail to be agreed upon by the contracting parties.

Nine nations have up to this time responded favorably, some indorsing the principle and asking that suggestions be submitted in regard to the details, others replying that the proposition is received sympathetically and expressing a

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