

# Bryan's Farewell

What he should have said.  
By T. S. Brown.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Convention: I knew before I came here that the majority was against me on the financial plank. I did not come because I delighted to be in a minority, but because I owed a duty to the six million men who voted for me in two campaigns, and considered it my duty to secure as much for them as I could. I was placed on the committee on platform. We were in session sixteen consecutive hours; extending through the night and till noon today. I fought every inch of the ground for what I conceived to be the interest of America's commoners. I was with the minority, and was vanquished, save in some minor points. That platform was brought in here and read. Not fifty men heard it. The convention was a bedlam. A motion was made to adopt, and it went through with a whoop, without the slightest pretense of deliberation.

Some of you have called me a dictator. It was false. You knew it was false. I have contended for certain things. Have you not exercised the same privilege? Why sirs, the right of a man to have an opinion and express it is more important and sacred than holding of any office, however high.

I have always believed, I believe to night, I shall believe, I hope, a man's duty to his country is higher than his duty to his party. I hope it will always be true that men of all parties will have the moral courage to leave their party when they believe that to stay with their party will be to injure their country. The success of your government depends upon the independence and the moral courage of its citizenship.

Mr. Chairman, if we are going to have some other god than this war god pressed to us by Governor Black as their man of "granite and iron," what kind of a god is it to be? Must we choose between a god of war and a god of gold? We now have the spectacular political farce of the republican party running on a gold platform and the democratic party running on a gold telegram. If there is anything that compares in hatefulness with militarism, is plutocracy, and I insist that the democratic party ought not to be compelled to choose between militarism on one side and plutocracy on the other.

But sirs, I am sorry to say that the democratic party in its official capacity has chosen the latter. The democratic party is as completely under the control of Wall street as the republican party. The triumph of the Wall street element of the party denies to the country any hope of relief on economic questions so far as democracy as now organized is concerned. The labor plank, as prepared by Judge Parker's friends on the sub-committee, was a straddling, meaningless plank. The nomination of Judge Parker virtually nullifies the anti-trust plank. The methods pursued to advance the candidacy of Judge Parker were a plain and deliberate attempt to deceive the party. His nomination was secured by crooked and indefensible methods. However this convention itself is plutocratic.

Labor has been snubbed from the very start. The employers' associations and the citizens' alliance secured two thousand seats in this convention while labor and the working classes were not given so much as an empty box for their comfort. And when Mr. Hobson of Alabama, whose past record shows him to be a man of more physical foolhardiness than rational courage, made the boast that Mr. Cleveland, a democratic president, was the only president with the courage to send, unsolicited, United States soldiers against striking union men you cheered him to the echo. The most of you are office-holders or office seekers. And you are prostituting the democratic party to plutocracy to get its aid to help you into power. We now have two organized colossal appetites thirsting for spoils. And verily the democratic party is "without fixed principles or settled policy, held together by the cohesive attraction of public plunder."

The voters of the party now find themselves in the clutches of a gang in the harness of a system as heartless as death. From their eyes no human power could draw a tear, and no suffering wring a pang from their bosoms. They are immune to every feeling or sentiment known to man. Wall street is a symbol of their power—where hearts and souls are ground into gold dust, whose gutters run full to overflowing with strangled, mangled, sandbagged wrecks of human hopes, which, in a never-ending stream, it pours into the brimming waters of

the river at its foot for deposit at the poor houses, insane asylums, state prisons and suicides' graves, that the grim hood washes in its daily ebb and now.

All down the ages despotism in various forms has ruled the world. It feasted at the table of submission in the past and gathers riches at the toll-gate of toleration at the present. It claims the spoils of war and the tribute of peace. Every time the oppressor and oppressed have clashed they have each risen again. Tyranny's legacy to the world is degradation. Liberty's legacy to man is progress. Justice and liberty will never cease to fire the souls of men, nor greed the tyranny to struggle for mastery. What is man if he but feed and sleep, when his neck is beneath the foot of the despot decked and adorned with the spoils of his victim's industry? Proud hearts may weep over wrongs, but ignorance and cowardice alone will worship oppression in any form, and driving sycophants "bend the pregnant hinges of the knee that thrift may follow fawning."

I know not what course others may take; but as for me, I'd rather be a patriot, loyal to mankind, and fling defiance in the face of fate than worship knaves in halls of state.

I'd rather be like those "rebellious traitors" of 1776, led by Washington, than to be like those Hessian hirelings, the cohorts of royal despotism, who served the "mother country."

I'd rather be like Robert Emmet who died on the scaffold, the victim of valor and the vengeance of imperial pride, than ruler of a realm that stamps its sons of liberty as traitors, if they dare murmur at the mandates of tyranny.

I'd rather be like the "Irish Avator," the matchless Henry Grattan, as he thundered despotism and plead the cause of his people at the British throne.

"With the skill of an Oppheus to soften the brute,  
With the fire of Prometheus to kindle mankind,  
Even tyranny listening sate melted or mute,

And corruption shrunk scorched, from the glance of his mind—  
Than to be like Lord Castlereagh, courted and petted by British royalty, bargaining the cause of his country for the flatteries of the crown.

I'd rather be like Andrew Jackson, hurling his mountaineers against the British army of invasion at New Orleans, than like Lord Pakingham leading his tory minions against a young republic.

I'd rather be like Thomas Francis Meagher, an exile from his native land because of his protests against the British yoke than to be like Lord Kitchener, giving his life service to the military mandates of the monarchy that for centuries has made the land of his nativity groan beneath the burden of servitude and toil—slaughtering the Soudanese and lending his aid in South Africa to make a solitude and call it peace.

I honor Maud Gonne-MacBride of Ireland but I do not feel like singing an oratorio to the memory of the "famine queen of England."

I'd rather be like San Martin and Simon Boliver, the liberators of South America, than like Cortez and Pizaro, the plunderers of the Aztecs and the Incas.

I'd rather be like Gomez and Garcia, struggling for the independence of Cuba, than like Weyler and Blanco in the service of the Castilian crown, waging a war of desolation against the just protestations of a people robbed by heartless extortion and ruled with the rod of iron.

I'd rather be like Kosinski and Pulaski, who, when they were vanquished at home in the struggle to maintain independence, crossed the wide ocean to where they heard liberty was gathering force to herself in the wilderness and bidding defiance to the crowned heads of the world; and there giving the last full measure of devotion gratis, to the cause of freedom in a foreign land, than to be like the czar whose iron heel stamped Poland a Russian province.

I'd rather be like Lafayette and Paul Jones, fighting at home and abroad, on land and sea, for the rights of man, than to be like Napoleon and Alexander, conquering the world to satiate the greed of ambition and vain glory.

Yes, my countrymen, like all men of principle from the first of time to the present day, I'd rather stand by my platform, stand by my convictions, stand by my flag, wrap its folds around me, die and be buried, than to surrender for the sake of an office. In this contest I'd rather be on the side of the rights of man and receive the



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...ants and jeers of the howling mob, whose members know not what they do, and the execrations of the knavish beneficiaries of evil, than to be the idol of a deluded constituency and the fondled favorite of an effete aristocracy, and strut in the parade of pomp and power. Verily, I'd rather receive the sanction and approbation of my moral conscience than the plaudits and platitudes of an erring world.

And now friends we have come to the parting of the ways.

Those whom I have fought and who have fought me ever since I entered the political arena are now in complete control of the democratic party. I must surrender or withdraw. I must sell my birthright for a mess of pottage or bid farewell to organized corruption. Which is the more honorable?

My political future may depend upon my staying with you; but, in the language of William Lloyd Garrison: "I will be as harsh as truth and as uncompromising as justice. I am in earnest. I will not equivocate, I will not excuse, I will not retreat a single inch, and I will be heard."

O, Democracy! what millions have paid the tribute of their trust to thee! and now, transformed into a demon by the magic touch of gold, you turn to devour those you coaxed to do you homage.

Ah, it is not to true democracy that I bid farewell, but to that plutocracy which has stolen a word from the vocabulary of freedom with which to serve oppression.

To where, my friends, do I turn? O, spirit of true democracy! peaceful strength from the Judean hills upon whose gentle power the world will yet repose, to thee again I go as in days gone by. Thou art ever found nestling close to the bosom of humanity, and today I find thee standing with a party which met in the city of Lin-

coln's home and placed as its standard bearer a gallant son of Dixie who fought side by side with me in the "First Battle"—Thomas E. Watson.

To that party I go; the party which I almost ruined by holding up what proved to be a false light, a vain hope—reform in the democratic party.

Parties may come and go, force and fraud may rule for the day, but thou, O democracy of Jefferson and Lincoln, shall go on forever, and rise like the eagle through the darkness and the storm, and live in the sunlight beyond when the tempest is past and gone.

But as Mr. Bryan did not say that and has failed to come up to the standard, to rise to the dignity of the occasion, to meet the imperative call of duty with the supply of manhood, it remains for you to do so. We welcome you home through the open gate that swings on the hinge of love. Why not come out into the light of a clear conscience and a free citizenship? Why not come and bask in the shimmering beams of truth's eternal glory? Out where the fires of persecution of the world's martyrs and heroes lend color to the dawn of the millenium.

My Countrymen: If we go down in final defeat in this struggle that flag which we honor with pride, will be but a defiled rag flaunting over a subjected race serving a money aristocracy. But if the people take hold of the ship of state and guide with prudence their civic destinies, then sirs,

So long as that flag shall bear aloft its glittering stars—bearing them amid the din of battle, and waving them triumphantly above the storms of the ocean—so long, I trust, shall the rights of American citizens be preserved safe and unimpaired, and transmitted as a sacred legacy from one generation to another.

Atwood, Tenn.