

Mr. Bryan's Speech In New York

At the Madison Square Garden meeting held on the evening of August 30, Mr. Bryan spoke for one hour and twenty minutes. The newspaper dispatches say he was frequently interrupted by great applause. Twenty thousand people participated in the noisy demonstrations. The press dispatches say that a particularly cordial demonstration occurred when Mr. Bryan told his hearers that he favored the government ownership of railroads, advocating the control by the federal government of the trunk lines, and the ownership of all other railroads by the state government. One interruption occurred when Mr. Bryan referred to socialism, stating that the man who declared that the trust is an economic growth and has come to stay is the one who is helping socialism.

Some one yelled "three cheers for socialism," but the call was drowned in hisses.

Mr. Bryan quickly said: "My friends, I have no objections to any man expressing himself in favor of socialism, because the socialist as a rule is an honest man. He is seeking what he believes to be a benefit with argument and not with abuse. I deny that the trust is an institution necessary for economic purposes. I deny that it is an economic institution at all. It is not economic, it is political. It rests not on natural laws, but on one man-made laws."

The following is taken from the Associated Press report:

As the guest of the commercial travelers' anti-trust league, Mr. Bryan was greeted by more than 20,000 persons, who filled the great structure from floor to upper gallery. The streets and avenues outside the garden were choked for blocks by other thousands, who stood patiently for hours for the privilege of even a fleeting glance at the distinguished visitor. The interior of the garden was a waving sea of color. Every person in the audience had been provided with an American flag, and every cheer from 20,000 throats was accentuated by the waving of 20,000 staffs bearing the stars and stripes.

When Mr. Bryan entered the hall the proceedings which had already begun were brought to a temporary pause while for eight minutes volley after volley of thunderous cheers rolled through the great building.

When Chairman Tom L. Johnson in his introduction of Mr. Bryan referred to the guest of the evening as "the first citizen, if not the first official of the land," and Mr. Bryan rose, the gathering broke out in unrestrained cheering while the band played "Hail to the Chief."

So touched was Mr. Bryan by the welcome that as he stood waiting for the cheers to subside, his eyes filled with tears and he strode nervously from side to side of the narrow platform.

"How can I thank you for this welcome home?" he said. "My heart would be ungrateful if it did not consecrate itself to your service. It was kind to prepare this reception. It was kind of Governor Folk to come here all the way from Missouri. It was kind of Tom Johnson, that example of the moral courage we so much need in this country, to tender his presence here. It was kind in you to recompense me fully in being absent so long from my native land. I thank you. I return to the land of my birth more proud of my citizenship than ever before."

Mr. Bryan then began his prepared address, saying:

"Like all travelers who have visited other lands, I return with delight to the land of my birth, more proud of its people, with more confidence in its government and grateful to the kind Providence that cast my lot in the United States. My national pride has been increased because of the abundant evidence I have seen in the altruistic interest taken by Americans in the people of other countries. No other nation can show such a record of benevolence and disinterested friendship. My love for our form of government has been quickened as I have visited castles and towers, and peered into dark dungeons and I am glad that our nation, profiting by the experience of the past and yet unhampered by traditions and unfettered by caste, has been permitted to form a new center of civilization on new soil and erect here a government of the people, by the people and for the people."

"I also return more deeply impressed than ever before with the responsibility that rests upon our nation as an exemplar among the nations and more solicitous that we, avoiding the

causes which have led other nations to decay, may present a higher ideal than has ever before been embodied in a national life and carry human progress to a higher plane than it has before reached.

"I desire, moreover, to acknowledge indebtedness to the American officials, who have everywhere shown us all possible courtesy and kindness. I do not know that I can better show my appreciation of the welcome accorded me by my countrymen than to submit some suggestions drawn from observations during the past year.

"A Japanese educator, addressing me through an interpreter, said: 'I wish you would find the worst thing in Japan and tell us about it so that we may correct it.' I commended the generous spirit which he manifested, but assured him that I had not visited Japan in search of faults and blemishes, but rather that I might find the best things in Japan and take them home for the benefit of my own people. Each nation can give lessons to every other, and while our nation is in a position to make the largest contribution, as I believe, to the education of the world, it ought to remain in the attitude of a pupil and be ever ready to profit by the experience of others.

"The first message that I bring from the old world is a message of peace. The cause of arbitration is making real progress in spite of the fact that the nations most prominent in the establishment of The Hague tribunal have themselves been engaged in wars since that court was organized. There is a perceptible growth in sentiment in favor of the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means. It was my good fortune to be present at the last session of the Inter-parliamentary Union, which convened in London on the 23d of July. Twenty-six nations were represented, and these included all the leading nations of the world. This peace congress, as it is generally known, not only adopted resolutions in favor of the limitation of armaments and the arbitration of all questions relating to debts, but unanimously endorsed the proposition that all questions of every nature should be submitted to an impartial tribunal for investigation, or to the mediation of friendly nations before hostilities are commenced.

"It is not necessary to point out the importance of the position taken. The embodiment of the suggestion in treaties would go a long way toward removing the probability of war. While the idea is of American origin, it was heartily accepted by the representatives of England, France, Germany and other European countries.

"I believe that if our nation would propose to make with every other nation a treaty providing that all questions in dispute between the parties should be submitted to The Hague court or some other impartial international tribunal for investigation and report before any declaration of war or commencement of hostilities, it would find many nations willing to enter into such a compact. I am sure from the public utterances of the present prime minister of Great Britain, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, that such a treaty could be made between the two great English speaking nations and their example would be followed until the danger of war would be almost, if not entirely, removed. To take the lead in such a movement would establish our position as a world power in the best sense of the term.

"What argument can be advanced against such action on the part of the United States? Shall we yield to any other nation in the estimate to be placed upon the value of human life? I confess that my aversion to killing increases with the years. Surely the Creator did not so plan the universe as to make the progress of the race dependent upon wholesale blood letting. I prefer to believe that war, instead of being an agency for good, is rather an evidence of man's surrender to his passions, and that one of the tests of civilization is man's willingness to submit his controversies to the arbitration of reason rather than of force.

"Another subject connected with our foreign relations: I venture to suggest that we may not only promote peace but also advance our commercial interests by announcing as a national policy that our navy will not be used for the collection of private debts. While protecting the lives of our citizens everywhere and guaranteeing personal safety to all who owe allegiance to our flag, we should, in my judgment, announce that

persons engaging in business and holding property in other lands for business purposes must be subject to the laws of the countries in which they engage in business enterprises. Many profitable fields of investment are now closed because the people of the smaller nations are afraid that an investment of foreign capital will be made an excuse for a foreign invasion. Several times on this trip this fact has been brought to my attention and I am convinced that for every dollar we could secure to American investors by an attempt to put the government back of their private claims we would lose many dollars by closing the door to investment. Mark the distinction between the protection of the lives of our citizens and the use of the navy to guarantee a profit on investments. We do not imprison for debt in the United States, neither do we put men to death because of their failure to pay what they owe, and our moral prestige as well as our commercial interests will be conserved by assuring all nations that American investments depend for protection upon the laws of the country to which the investors go.

"Before leaving international politics let me add that our nation has lost prestige rather than gained it, by our experiment in colonialism. We have given the monarchist a chance to ridicule our declaration of independence and the scoffer has twitted us with inconsistency. A tour through the Philippine islands has deepened the conviction that we should lose no time in announcing our purpose to deal with the Filipinos as we dealt with the Cubans. Every consideration, commercial and political, leads to this conclusion. Such ground as we may need for coaling stations or for a naval base will be gladly conceded by the Filipinos, who simply desire an opportunity to work out their own destiny, inspired by our example and aided by our advice. Insofar as our efforts have been directed toward the education of the Filipinos, we have rendered them a distinct service, but in educating them we must recognize that we are making colonialism impossible. If we intended to hold them as subjects we would not dare to educate them. Self-government with ultimate independence must be assumed if we contemplate universal education in the Philippines. As soon as opportunity offers I shall discuss the Philippine question more at length, and I shall refer to English rule in India, for it throws light upon our own problems in the Philippines, but these subjects must be reserved until I can speak more in detail.

"In several of the nations of Europe the legislative department of government is more quickly responsive to public sentiment than is our congress. In England, for instance, where the ministry is formed from the dominant party, when an election is held upon any important issue, the government proceeds to put into law the will of the people expressed at the polls. While our system is superior in many respects, it has one defect, viz: that congress does not meet in regular session until thirteen months after the election. During this period there is uncertainty long drawn out, which to the business community is often more damaging than a change of policy promptly carried into effect. Would not the situation be improved by a constitutional amendment convening the first session of congress within a few months after the election and compelling the second session to adjourn several days before the following election? Such a change would not only protect legitimate business interests and give the public the benefit of more prompt relief through remedial legislation, but it would protect the people from the jobs that are usually reserved for the short session which is now held after the election and when many of the members retired feel less responsibility because of defeat at the polls.

"I return more strongly convinced than before of the importance of a change in the methods of electing United States senators. There is noticeable everywhere a distinct movement toward democracy in its broadest sense. In all the countries which I have visited there is a demand that the government be brought nearer to the people; in China a constitution is under consideration; in Japan the people are demanding that the ministry instead of being chosen by the emperor from among his particular friends shall be selected from parliament and be in harmony with the dominant sentiment; in India there is agitation in favor of a native congress; in Russia the czar has been compelled to recognize the popular voice