

NATION VERSUS STATE

W. J. BRYAN AND SENATOR BEVERIDGE.

MR. BRYAN'S REPLY.

"Senator Beveridge's article on 'The Nation,' which appeared in the Reader magazine, says: 'There can be no danger from the national government except the danger that comes from the American people themselves, acting in common; and, of course, the people are not going to injure themselves or their own interests.'

"This is a very plausible argument, and it would be sound but for the fact that it entirely overlooks the reasons which are urged in the defense of local self-government.

"Yes, the people of the states are the same people who act together as parts of the union, but when the people of a state act together on a local matter they are nearer to the subject under discussion and, therefore, can act more intelligently. If the arguments in defense of local self-government are unsound, then the whole theory of self-government is defective. It must be assumed that the people want to do what is right—upon no other theory can we have self-government. It must also be assumed that the people can act most intelligently upon that which they best understand. That they can best understand a thing with which they deal daily is axiomatic; and it is equally true that they will study most those things in which they are individually interested."

Mr. Bryan here refers to the negro problem of the south and the oriental problem of the Pacific coast, asserting that these may best be handled by the people of those localities without the interference of the national government. He continues:

"Senator Beveridge does not mention either of these race questions, and yet, according to the doctrine which he laid down, 'the American people themselves acting in common' could deal with the subject as well as the American people acting independently in the several states.

"The second proposition advanced by Senator Beveridge in the Reader last month is that 'the powerful interests which exploit the people and the nation's resources can more easily handle a smaller portion of the American people for their purposes than they can handle the entire eighty millions of the people for their purposes.' He should have said that the representatives of predatory wealth are advocates of state's rights when prosecuted by the national government and advocates of centralization whenever they are attacked by any state. If he will review the history of the last twenty-five years, he will find that the very corporations which he now charges with being friendly to state's rights have constantly defied the states and sought shelter in the federal courts. Whenever a state has attempted the regulation of rates, the railroads have at once invoked the power of the federal courts to enjoin and to suspend. The United States courts are now filled with suits that ought to be tried in the state courts, but which are dragged into the federal courts for two reasons—first, to get them so far away from the plaintiffs as to make litigation expensive, and second, to secure trial before judges who are appointed for life by federal authorities and often upon the recommendation of corporate representatives.

After asserting that Senator Beveridge's position on the state's rights question involved in the Chicago strikes of 1892 to be directly opposed to the platform upon which Lincoln was elected, Mr. Bryan takes up the subject of the national bank charter, asserting that it was not urged by the people for the purpose of restraining large moneyed interests; it was, on the other hand, advocated by moneyed interests and has ever since been defended by moneyed interests. Even now the national bankers, not satisfied with the advantage of being banks of deposit, not content even with the profits of a bank currency based on bonds, are urging such an extension of the system as to include the so-called emergency notes which are in fact a part of the asset currency scheme, for which national bankers have been working for years, Mr. Bryan continues:

"Most of the illustrations given by Senator Beveridge are entirely outside of the discussion. I will mention four of these: First, the law forbidding the sending of obscene literature through the mails. The mails are under federal control. The authority that is responsible for the carrying of the mails certainly is responsible for the morals of the service as well as for the actual transportation of the letters and papers. The federal government could not excuse itself if it allowed its agents

to be employed in the delivery of obscene literature. The fact that a few persons who made money out of the circulation of such literature attempted to employ the state's rights argument can not be used to weaken the force of the arguments employed against real encroachments upon rights of the states.

"The same may be said of the lottery. The federal government being responsible for the mails, was the only authority which could act. The states were powerless to interfere with the mails or with interstate commerce, and it is not fair to charge up the sins of the lottery company or the arguments made by its attorneys against those who believe that the line between the state and the nation should be preserved.

"Pure food laws and meat inspection are also within the domain of interstate commerce, and the enactment of such laws should not be cited as a reason why the states should be reduced in dignity and influence.

"The power of congress over interstate commerce is complete. This power is not only complete, but its exercise is necessary, the various states being impotent when it comes to matters of interstate commerce. I have given to Senator Beveridge's child labor bill whatever support I could. It is right in principle; it is necessary, and it does not interfere with the reserved rights of the states.

"The state and the nation are both necessary—the nation for the protection of the people from without and for that work which all the people must do together; but the state must continue to be the champion of the home, the school, the community and the local interests which are best understood by the people of each community and best defended by those who understand the conditions to be met."

SENATOR BEVERIDGE'S REPLY.

"This question is far broader than parties. I decline to permit this debate to degenerate into a mere partisan fray. Doubtless Mr. Bryan will say, in answer to my indictments of the financial interests that are manipulating this recrudescence of state's rights, that many republicans are against the present tendency toward centralization. Of course I could retort that Mr. Bryan is himself as great a 'centralizationist' as our wonderful young president, and even a greater one, I am sorry to say—for does not Mr. Bryan not advocate government ownership of railways? I admit that certain republicans see the 'grave dangers of centralization.' But I attack these republicans more unreservedly than I do state's rights democrats, for the latter have some excuse in the traditions of their party; and the former have none.

"Mr. Bryan says in the Reader, that:

"A systematic absorption of power by the federal government would not only cause discontent and weaken the attachment of the people for the government, but a withdrawal of power from the state would breed indifference to public affairs—the forerunner of despotism."

"Despotism" from whom, Mr. Bryan? For the national government is the American people. Mr. Roosevelt is powerful only as he personifies the American people. Jackson was 'despotic' only as he gathered into himself and then radiated again the will of the people. So was Washington. So was Lincoln, whose murderer exclaimed 'Sic semper tyrannis.' If Mr. Bryan should become president he could be 'despotic' only as he represented the convictions of the people.

"Again Mr. Bryan is wrong in thinking that 'the withdrawal of power from the state would breed indifference to public affairs;' for have the people ever taken such an interest in 'public affairs' in all our history as they do now? And was there ever such a 'systematic absorption of power by the federal government' as there is now?

"Have we not, in the railway rate bill, asserted the right of the nation to control the railways of the republic? When was that ever done before? Never!"

With like effect Senator Beveridge refers to federal legislation upon pure food, meat inspection, national quarantine, commerce and labor and asks:

"Have all these laws 'caused discontent,' again to quote Mr. Bryan's article in the Reader? And, if they have 'caused discontent,' among whom is that 'discontent' found? Not among the people, certainly; for the people applaud all these laws. But they have 'caused discontent' among the wreckers of railways, the manipulators of

the beef trust, the managers of the food and drug trust and all other buccaneers of business. If Mr. Bryan says that democrats voted for these bills, the answer is that this shows how dead 'state's rights' really is, for these laws are violations of that theory.

"The constitution provides that 'All treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every state shall be bound thereby, anything in the constitution or laws of any state to the contrary notwithstanding.'"

In regard to the Japanese trouble the senator remarks:

"But the offended foreign nation whose contract with us, as a nation, has been violated, says, 'I did not make a treaty with any little nation called a "state;" I made a treaty with the only nation I know—the American republic.' We answer, 'That is quite true; but nevertheless this little nation is "sovereign." And we—the big nation—are powerless.'"

"The foreign nation answers, 'To whom, then, am I to look; to the little nation? No, for I made no contract with it. The contract I made was with you, the big nation—and I see in your constitution that the treaties you, the big nation, make are the "supreme law of the land," the "constitution or laws of any state to the contrary notwithstanding.'"

"So we get into war with the foreign nation because of the action of a little nation within us which nullifies our constitution and violates the pledge of the American republic. No! not all of this little nation called a state either, but only a small part of it.

"And one word further about this California matter: San Francisco had an earthquake; its great buildings tumbled to the ground. The city was in flames. The governor failed to call on the nation for aid, and the state legislature was not in session. Nevertheless, the national government gave aid. Funston did not answer the call of the governor or legislature; Funston answered the call of the flames. Secretary Taft, before a committee of the senate, voluntarily stated that, strictly speaking, the government had committed treason. Why? Because the constitution says that the nation shall supply its troops to suppress disorder only when the governor or legislature calls for them; and neither California's governor nor legislature had called for troops.

"And yet nobody complained of this 'treason.' San Francisco was grateful. Why, then, this commotion about California's 'rights' now, because of eighteen Japanese children, and no protest against the violation of the constitution then, by the nation's troops aiding San Francisco in its sore distress? It does not appear very consistent, does it? Does the democratic party approve of the action of the government in that case? If they do, why do they disapprove of the mild attitude of Roosevelt in pleading with San Francisco's mayor to avert a national war?

"Think of that! The president of ninety millions of people pleading with the mayor of a few thousands of people to prevent those few thousands from plunging the whole ninety mil-

lions into war. To this deep humiliation—to this grave danger—state's rights brings us.

"Every step upward in the world's esteem has been won by nationality. Shall we be one people, the greatest force for righteousness beneath the skies, or shall we be forty-six peoples? That, in the final analysis, is the question. Shall we have one flag or forty-six flags?"

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Little Melinda Brown—Her Book.

Torn and battered and smeared with paint
Ladies in purple and knights in blue—
Cinderella of gentle plight

Decked in a gown of gorgeous hue;
Hop-o'-my-thumb and Goody Two-shoe;
A fairy green and a yellow spook—
These are the playmates once she knew;
"Little Melinda Brown—Her Book."

Here is the fabled and fair Genait;
Here is the giant Bolgharhoo;
Here is the soft-voiced, lovely saint
Of the falling diamonds and pearls;
and, too,

This is the terrible Bluebeard who
Spoke so loud that his wives all shook!
Do you remember? I know you do;
"Little Melinda Brown—Her Book."

Apples of Sodom have left their taint;
In the ambrosia is taste of rue;
Try as we may, alas! we mayn't
Summon them now, as we used to do;
Spirits of life when life was new,
Or ever our errand way we took;
These are the stories that once were true,
"Little Melinda Brown—Her Book."

ENVOY

Friends of my childhood, fair and quaint,
Forgive, forgive, that my heart for-
sook!
My love I send in this rhythmic plaint
To "Little Melinda Brown—Her Book."
—Harper's.

When your friends laugh at your
jokes it may not be because the jokes
are good, but because you friends are
loyal.

It will be heaven enough after death
not to have to come back to this world
and discover how soon we are for-
gotten.

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