

BRYAN AS A SHOW.

It is becoming less easy to avoid seeing the humorous side of Colonel Bryan's itinerant and oratorical chase for the presidency. In 1896, when he was in the enemy's country for the purpose of being told that he was a nominee for the presidency, it was reported that he encountered a small company of villagers on the banks of the Hudson and immediately proceeded to make a speech. After explaining who he was he told them that whenever he saw two or three people gathered together the temptation to make a speech to them was irresistible. There is something exquisitely funny in this desire to declaim on all occasions. The country knows Mr. Bryan only as posing before an audience of "fellow citizens" and gesticulating in time to his voice of warning. The late Mrs. Jeremiah Crutcher's tendency to "flop" was nothing to Mr. Bryan's spell-binding habit. On emerging from the Yosemite the other day his voice overtook him at Wawona. He had not had a relapse after leaving Stockton on the way up, and three days' abstinence had made it necessary for him to utter himself.

The reception committee appointed to escort him was there, acting as pallbearers. These and the cooks, waiters and chambermaids, hostlers and drivers, who are necessary to the administration of Washburn's hotel and stage line, made a company that brought on an oratorical fit, and Bryan had to talk. Captain Steve Cunningham was there listening with a critic's ear and reminded, by the hour and a half of words, that in selling onions to foreign tourists for the Lady Washington Lily bulbs he is not the only faker on the road.

Uncle Jim Lawrence was also in the audience, blind of an eye, but able to see the holes in a ladder. Mr. Bryan announced his subject to be "The Beauties of the Yosemite, and Observations on Politics."

The reporters who were present have preserved none of it, but contented themselves with intimating that he held his audience spellbound.

The speech, therefore, seems to have been like the most of those delivered by Mr. Bryan. There was no thought in it that sticks and stays. It is a remarkable testimony to his physical endurance that he has since 1896 been almost ceaselessly talking, and has said nothing that is remembered, nothing that has sunk into the public mind and memory to be readily recalled and quoted by his followers. He has given his mind a long rest and has taken an intellectual vacation by talking. The professional orator has no immortality unless he has a message to deliver, an idea to clothe in proper verbiage. The country can recall the ideas of Sumner, Blaine, Edward Everett, Conkling, Ingersoll, Wendell Phillips and Lincoln in the phrase that expressed

them. They impressed a contemporary generation and passed into folklore and popular tradition. Mr. Bryan is exceedingly contemporary with this present generation. He is extremely convenient and chronically in evidence. He has talked more and said less than any present or past jobster at oratory, and the transitory mark he has made is evidenced by the few "remains" he has left in the public memory. He lacks in originality. As an adapter he has some skill. He adapted his free silver ideas from poor Dick Bland, and by veneering them with some vocal soapsuds took from Bland a presidential nomination to which he was fairly entitled. He has, in like manner, adapted John Sherman's ideas on trusts, and those of Hoar, Boutwell, Edmunds and Johnson on imperialism, and it must be confessed he has ensmallled them all to accommodate them to the caliber of his oratory.

A close study of Mr. Bryan reveals him as an actor. He is a born thespian. He approaches every question with a view to stage effect. His faculty of adaptation of the ideas of others and his fondness for dramatic exits and entrances are all the characteristics of a player. His tendency to begin making a speech to any crowd he sees marks him a natural-born barnstormer.

The impression he leaves is exactly that produced by a show. In his progress through the country in 1896 the crowds that heard him were larger than had ever listened before to a stump speaker, but where his audiences were largest his vote was the smallest. The people had gone to a show. They wanted to hear a "boy orator" aged 40. They heard him, applauded him even, went home and voted the other ticket. To them it was a circus, a passing show. The same crowds go to "the unparalleled aggregation of biological wonders and agglomeration of mental and muscular masters of magic and mystery," but they don't remember the clown's songs nor take the ring-master's advice in their public or domestic affairs.

So, rising from the circus to the stage, the audience weeps over Desdemona, though it knows she is not smothered, and it goes to the tomb in tears with Juliet, knowing that she will be at her mutton broth and beer when the play is over.

Mr. Bryan excites just that sort of interest and no other.

The feeling for him in his audiences is perfectly sincere of its kind. He is playing a part, does it fairly well, and earns applause and something more substantial, and gets both, and there the impression ends.

After his next defeat for the presidency he should follow his trend and talents and take to the stage. His age would be no bar, for his political career has really been a course of study and practice for the sock and buskin. He

would get large audiences and make the fortune of his manager and his own.—From the San Francisco Daily Call, Saturday Sept. 9, 1899.

SOME BRYANISMS.

San Francisco has heard Mr. Bryan again, has heard him by thousands, cheered him, and gone home, while he took to the road to make another speech. His effort at Woodward's pavilion was an excellent sample of his assertive style. Today we propose to analyze only a portion of it, saying in advance that the anti-imperial sentiment of the country cannot be, and will not be, used to elevate Mr. Bryan to the presidency.

In discussing the platform of 1900 he said: "Do you doubt that the demand for arbitration between labor and capital is stronger today than it was in 1896? I believe it is stronger, and that the demand for arbitration will grow until the arbitration of disputes between corporate capital and employes of capital will be as well systematized and as practicable as is the court of justice today for the settlement of disputes between man and man." Now all that is high sounding and implies a great "grievance" existing somewhere, to cure which this Don Quixote appears, with a barber's basin for the helmet of Mambrino and a basswood stick for the sword of Mundarra, offering himself for office, for the healing of the nations. His talk on arbitration is in apparent ignorance of the fact that it is in constant operation between employers and employed. The essence of arbitration is that it is voluntary. That is the difference between it and a court of justice. When an issue goes to a court, free will ceases. It is no longer a voluntary matter. The plaintiff has stated his case and in his petition has demanded his remedy. The defendant must appear at the bar and give his reasons in avoidance of judgment. If these are not good in law, judgment rests upon him and is enforced by the court. If the defendant refuse or neglect to appear he is in default, and judgment is entered against him. In the arbitration of differences it is for both parties to assent or for either to refuse. That is the essence of it, the mutual consent of the parties to the issue joined. This makes the difference between arbitration and the courts of justice, and the difference is radical. Keeping in mind this element of consent, and of a tribunal in which there is neither plaintiff nor defendant, one may well ask: What does Mr. Bryan mean when he speaks of a "demand for arbitration?" Does he mean that there is to be a federal or state statute compelling one party to arbitrate when the other desires it? If so, he will do away with the difference between arbitration and the courts, for free consent will disappear,