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IN THE PUBLIC VIEW



Mr. William Jennings Bryan and Rev. J. A. Macdonald of the Globe, the two preacher-editors, doing Toronto.

ONCE upon a time when Mr. R. J. Fleming was Mayor of Toronto he was chairman of a large meeting in Massey Hall at which the only speaker was the man from Nebraska. There was a large audience and everybody in it had come for no other purpose than to hear the remarkable and spectacular man who was then in the running for the Presidency of the United States. The Mayor rose to introduce the speaker. After some preamble he said: "I have now the honour to introduce to you Mr. William Jennings—" There was an immediate and responsive snigger all over the audience. Mr. Fleming looked around in bewilderment. Mr. Bryan coolly asked the chairman for a pencil, hurriedly scribbled his name and handed it to the chairman, who after clearing his throat said with a laugh that was meant to be good-natured: "I should say rather 'Mr. William Jennings Bryan.'"

Mr. Bryan will remember this incident. On his recent visit he recalled Mr. Fleming and that meeting in Massey Hall. It is quite likely indeed that he has often told it as a joke on himself. He has come and gone. Two cities in Canada are recalling the things he said. Some are wondering why he came at all. But he will never again be called Mr. Jennings. Bryan off the platform is a different man. Among the boys he is not the preacher nor the orator. Neither is he like the Mayor of Chicago, "Out for a time." He is the story-teller and the humourist. Bryan knows how to tell a story. He tells good stories. Even an old story by Bryan would sound rather new. He has his stories all archived in his brain. There is the story from Mississippi and the story from Iowa; the yarn from Kansas and the yarn from Nebraska. To each and every story there is some practical application. In this respect he has the habit of the preacher. His pronunciation is not always academic. The absence of a large number of teeth has a good deal to do with that; his inborn Nebraska habit a good deal more. He is not always careful about endings. In Bryan this does not seem a serious defect. He is the great commoner in language—except when he chooses to become oratorical. He is a good and fluent talker. He talks so well that it would be a pity to confine him to an office. He has such an everlasting fund of ideas that it would be robbing him of his birth-right to hitch him

up to an executive function. He is so excellent a traveller that if he ever became President he would need to leave Washington oftener than Roosevelt has ever done; for he is a vast imbibor and assimilator of ideas. He has a personality which gets quickly into sympathy with people. He is a hugely interested man. Places and people mean much to him. Like Kipling he travels with the open eye and the extended ear. Unlike Mr. Wm. T. Stead—a different sort of William—he is able to repress the I in his make-up in order to find out what interests the people. Stead spoke for two hours in Toronto one night without even an allusion to Canada. Bryan when in Toronto wore the Union Jack for a boutonniere and had almost everything to say that he thought would be acceptable to the people he had come to entertain.

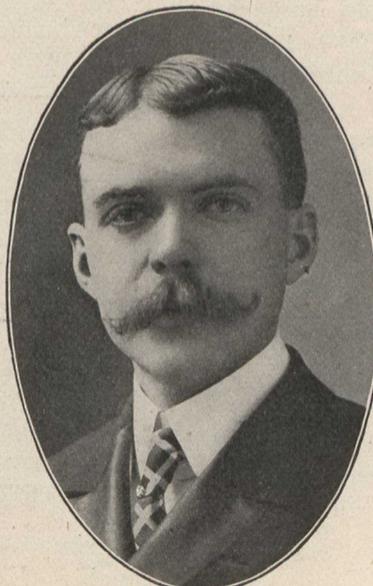
In brief, everybody likes Bryan. In this country his politics have no weight. His personality is everything. He would be just as acceptable to Canadians as a Republican. He is bigger than politics. On the street and the train he is a bigger man than on any political platform. He has the universal sense of Mark Twain. He is the biggest United States personality that ever visited Canada and is perhaps the biggest unelected man in the United States. Whether election could ever make Bryan any bigger or permit him to remain as big as he now is, might be open to grave conjecture. He is a man of the people; a bigger man than any party; the sort of man of whom the older peoples used to make kings before politics was invented.



Mr. Bryan on Canadian streets.

ONCE it was Wiman; now it is Minard. In his day Erastus Wiman said some plain things about the absorption of Canada by the United States. He had a large number of listeners, most of whom are now either dead or converted. According to newspaper reports Mr. R. W. L. Minard, the president of the Canadian Club in Boston, has said: "In an American-Jap war, were it not for the American attitude on the tariff, Canada would sever its allegiance to Great Britain and would come to the aid of the United States. So far as I am able to judge of the feeling of my countrymen, a treaty of the mother country would have no influence on their actions in the event of war." Now whether this is the exact sentiment which should be credited to Mr. Minard or not, Boston is historically the most appropriate place to

say such things. It was in Boston harbour that the Revolutionists tried to steep the English tea on which they refused to pay taxes. At any rate Mr. Minard has a grave fear of the "yellow peril." Mr. Bryan has none. The Boston Canadian sees that the Dingley Bill is higher than Haman's gallows when it comes to a United North America. In Mr. Wiman's and Mr. Butterworth's day there was no Dingley Bill. What little tariff wall there was they wanted to pull down. In those days there was little or no international labour question between Canada and the United States. Now reciprocity in the labour movement has grown along with the tariff. It is significant that Kipling saw in British immigration the natural cure for the yellow peril, while Mr. Minard is credited with a belief that Canada would throw off allegiance to Great Britain rather than differ vitally with the United States on the question of Oriental immigration. It is not less remarkable that in conversation with a prominent Toronto financier a few days ago the Governor-General of Canada predicted that in time to come the seat of Imperial Government would be shifted to Canada; which must be taken to imply that many millions of British immigrants must have settled in Canada as British subjects long before the close of this century.



Mr. R. W. L. Minard,
President of Canadian Club, Boston.