

Speeches of Robert M. La Follette

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Campaign Scrapbook, 1900. Robert M. La Follette Papers.
Wisconsin Historical Society

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1900.

LA FOLLETTE AT CHILTON

LARGE AUDIENCE PACKS TURNER HALL TO HEAR HIM.

CLOSING MEETING OF A VERY SUCCESSFUL WEEK.

FARMERS POUR INTO THE TOWN FROM ALL DIRECTIONS.

TORCH LIGHT PROCESSION PRECEDES THE MEETING.

Chilton, Wis., Sept. 29.—Robert M. La Follette closed the week at this place to-night and was greeted with just as large an audience as could be packed within the walls of the Turner hall. It was a fitting close to a most successful week, with the single exception of the meeting in Oshkosh Monday evening, when a steady downpour of rain served to keep the people at home. The audiences that have gathered have been only limited by the size of the halls in which they were held. In every instance many, very many were unable to gain admission. At Sturgeon Bay last evening a storm that shut the place off from telegraphic communication with the outside world, did not deter the people from turning out and filling the hall from platform to entrance door.

The meeting here was preceded by a torchlight procession which escorted Mr. La Follette from the hotel to the hall. The farmers came by team from Hilbert and Brillion and Forest Junction on the North, and from Hayton, New Holstein, Kiel and Plymouth by rail. They joined the crowd upon the pavement and followed the torch bearers to the hall. Upon the platform were ex-Congressman S. A. Cook and the delegates from Calumet county to the state convention, who added their voice to the acclaim that made Robert M. La Follette the unanimous nominee of the convention.

They appeared upon the platform with their delegate badges. They were W. N. Knauf, William Michaupt, H. F. Pengel, Cyrus Heimermann, Otto Luehr, Jacob Luecker and William Greverus.

S. A. Cook Presides.

Andrew Noll, a member of the Republican State Central committee, called the meeting to order and introduced ex-Con-

gressman S. A. Cook as the chairman of the meeting. As Mr. Cook stepped forward to greet his old friends and neighbors he was received with a tremendous round of applause. He was visibly affected by the greeting which he received. When quiet had been restored Mr. Cook said:

"Fellow Citizens and Neighbors of Calumet County: This is an unexpected honor, but one that is none the less appreciated. I am pleased to see so many familiar faces in the audience to-night. Forty-four years ago I settled in this county and although the active pursuits of business have taken me to an adjoining county I have watched with deep interest the progress you have made. With brawn and brain you have redeemed the wilderness I found here and have made this the garden spot of the Badger state. The Calumet is the token of peace; your industry and thrift have added to peace plenty. The government at Washington has given us all prosperity, while the law abiding citizenship is a guarantee for the continuance of peace and plenty, it remains for you as individuals by your ballots in November to declare whether prosperity shall continue. It is not my purpose to make a speech or to intrude on the time of the able gentleman whom you have come to listen to, but to introduce to you the next governor of Wisconsin, the orator and statesman who is true to his convictions, the Hon. Robert M. La Follette." For the first time in the history of Chilton a candidate for governor of the state was to address the citizens at a political meeting.

Applause for La Follette.

It was an event in the community. They thoroughly appreciated this and as Mr. La Follette stepped to the front he was greeted with a tremendous round of applause. He expressed his gratification at the large audience that had assembled to hear him in this stronghold of the Democratic party in the past in the state of Wisconsin. Without any further delay he took up the issues of the campaign. He reviewed at length the history of the Spanish-American war and the rebellion in the Philippine islands as the sequence to the war for which both Democrats and Republicans clamored for in the name of humanity. As he went step by step through the action of the administration in putting down the rebellion of Aguinaldo, of the conspiracy hatched by the rebel chief in Hong Kong, the vast audience, made up almost exclusively of Germans, paid the closest attention and broke forth into frequent rounds of applause.

Quotes From Bryan's Letter.

Mr. La Follette quoted from Mr. Bryan's letter of acceptance and pointed out the discrepancies therein. He showed that the Filipinos never had a government and that there was no one authorized to receive the government. "It is getting pretty warm here fellow citizens," said Mr. La Follette, a voice: "You are talking pretty hot," (Laughter.) La-Follette—"If there will be no offense I should like to take off my coat." A grand chorus: "Take it off."

Mr. La Follette continued his argument on the Philippine question and pointed out the ridiculous position in which the Democratic party had placed itself by raising the cry of militarism, which caused

laughter and applause. The money question and the tariff were discussed and then the state platform was taken up, the speaker making a stirring appeal in favor of a primary election law which found a responsive cord among his audience. It was one of the most attentive and appreciative gatherings of the campaign.

Mr. La Follette left on the 1 o'clock train for Madison by way of Milwaukee, where he will spend Sunday with his family.

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