


## BJÖRNSSON

 BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSSON, a distinguished Norwegian dramatist, novelist, and orator, was born at Kvikne, Oesterdal, Norway, Dec. 8, 1832. He was the son of a Lutheran clergyman, and, after studying at the Latin school at Molde, in 1852 he entered the University of Christiania. His attention was early drawn to literature, and his first book "Synnöve Solbakken," a novel of Norwegian peasant life, appeared in 1857. It was almost immediately popular and was followed by "Arne" (1858), "En Glad Gut" (A Happy Boy) (1859), and "Fiskerjenten" (The Fisher Maiden) (1868). During this period he was engaged also in producing dramas, which did not so quickly win their way to favor, the first of them being a tragedy, "Halte-Hulda" (Lame Hulda). To this succeeded "Kong Sverre" (1861); "Sigurd Slembe" (1862), a masterly trilogy which showed him at his best; "De Nygifte" (The Newly Married) (1865), a comedy; "Maria Stuart" (1867), a tragedy. After 1870, Björnsson devoted himself assiduously to the study of foreign thought and literature, with the result that by 1874 he became an advocate of republican ideas and of free thought in religion. Besides declaring his new views in various utterances and addresses, he gave form to them in a notable series of dramas bearing upon the problems of the time, such as "Redakteren" (The Editor) (1874); "En Fallit" (A Bankruptcy) (1875); "Det nye System" (The New System) (1875); "Kongen" (The King) (1879); "Leonarda" (1879); "En Hanske" (A Glove) (1883); and "Over Evne" (Overstrained) (1883). Among other works of his are: "Magnhild" (1877); "Kaptein Mansana" (1879); "Arnljot Gelline" (1892); and "Johanne" (1898). Björnsson was for many years popular as an orator. To English readers, he is perhaps best known by translations of his novels: "In God's Way," "Arne," and "The Fisher Maiden," and by his drama "The Pillars of Society."

## FROM ADDRESS AT THE GRAVE OF OLE BULL

OLE BULL was loved,—that has been shown at his grave to-day. Ole Bull was honored; but it is more to be loved than to be honored. If we wish to understand the origin of this deep affection for Ole Bull—to understand Ole Bull himself, what he was, and what he now is for us—we must go back to the time when he first came before the public.

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We were a poor and diminutive people with a great past behind us and ambitions for the future which we were unable to fulfil; so we were looked upon with scorn. We were thought incapable of intellectual independence; even the so-called best among us thought the same. A Norwegian literature was thought an impossibility, even with its then rich beginnings; the idea of an independent Norwegian school of history was something to laugh at; our language was rough and unrefined, and not to be listened to unless spoken with the Danish accent; the development of Norwegian dramatic art was something too absurd to be thought of.

In politics it was the same. We had been newly bought and sold; and the freedom which we dared to take and which we had dared both to hold and to extend, even that gave us no security. We dared not show even "official" gladness, as it could be made uncomfortable for us in high places. . . .

Then a new generation came up, bred in those first years of our national life, which had not shared the burden of its elders nor sympathized with their forbearance and silence. On the contrary, it was inspired by a feeling of resentment; it was aggressive and restless as the sea. It revelled in the morning feeling of freedom; and just at this time Ole Bull's music came as the first gleams of the sun on the mountain's summit.

Our folk melodies were just beginning to be recognized as music; the democratic element was slowly leavening the aristocracy; a national feeling was being born.

When we talk with old people of the time when Ole Bull suddenly came before the world, of how he stood before emperors and kings; of how the great opera houses of Europe were thronged to listen to his music; how he played with a wild and mysterious power, a power peculiar

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to himself, which was heartfelt, was Norwegian; when they read to us how his violin sang the Norwegian folk melodies while his audiences laughed and cried, and behind all rose visions of our people and our magnificent country,—one can understand the promise, the feeling of self-dependence, of strength, of pride he awakened—he first—in Norwegian hearts.

When he came home from his first tour abroad, only to see him was a feast; when he played the old airs which had lain hidden in the hearts of the people, but which had been listened to with delight by kings and princes, then young Norway felt itself lifted to the supremest height of existence. To his immortal honor, he gave us the gift which at that time we most needed—self-confidence.

It may be asked how did it happen that Ole Bull was the one set apart to accomplish this work. He came of a musical race, but that would have availed little had it not been for his burning patriotism. He was a child in the time of our war for independence, and his young voice mingled with the first hurrah for our new freedom. When he was a lad his violin sang in jubilant tones our first national songs at the student quarters of Henrik Wergeland. Patriotism was the creative power in his life. When he established the Norwegian theatre; when he supported and encouraged Norwegian art; when he gave his help to the National museum; when he played for every patriotic object; when he stretched out a helping hand, wherever he went, to his countrymen in need,—it was not so much for the person or object as for Norway. He always in all places and under all conditions felt himself our representative.

There was something naïve, something jealous about his patriotism, born of the peculiar conditions of the time. But


it was something for us that our "finest" man, fresh from the courts and intellectual circles of Europe, could and would go arm-in-arm with our poor beginnings which were even less "fine" than now. It was this steadfast devotion to the things in which he believed that made Ole Bull dear to the people.

When he talked about his art he used to say, that he learned to play from the Italians. That was in a measure true. The outward form, the technique, was learned in Italy, but that in his playing which touched the heart and brought smiles and tears was born in his own soul, and its direct messenger was the folk song, tinged and permeated with the love of the fatherland.

[Special translation by Charles E. Hurd.]



## GENERAL J. B. GORDON

OHN BROWN GORDON, American Democratic senator, Confederate general, and ex-Governor of Georgia, was born in Upson Co., Ga., Feb. 6, 1832, and educated at the University of Georgia. He subsequently studied law and was admitted to the Bar. In the Civil War, he espoused the Southern side, entered the Confederate army, and rose from the ranks to be major-general. He was eight times wounded, and severely so at Antietam, and at Appomattox Court House was in command of a wing of General R. E. Lee's army. In 1868, he was Democratic candidate for the governorship of his own State, but was unsuccessful at that time in his aspirations. In 1868 and again in 1872 he was a delegate to the national Democratic conventions of those years, also presidential elector for the State at large. From 1872 to 1880 he was a member of the United States Senate, and from 1887 to 1890 was Governor of Georgia. In 1890, he was again returned to the United States Senate.

### ON SILVER COINAGE

SPEECH DELIVERED IN THE UNITED STATES SENATE, AUGUST, 1893.

MR. PRESIDENT, as a loyal soldier of the bimetallic cause, enlisted for the war, I had hoped to stand shoulder to shoulder here and elsewhere with the friends of that cause until its ultimate triumph. I had hoped to surrender any convictions of my own as to plans of action and follow the programme marked out by their combined wisdom. But, sir, as the difficulties and perplexities and dangers of this strange and unprecedented condition thicken around us, and as the responsibilities bear more and more heavily upon individual shoulders, each of us must feel that for himself, and not for others, he must answer by his act to his own conscience, his constituency, and the country.

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As one in a darkened chamber from which the lights have been suddenly extinguished gropes his way in uncertainty until, the eye becoming more accustomed to the darkness, he begins to see still faintly, but somewhat more clearly, the objects around him, so some of us, struggling to penetrate this dense financial gloom, are stumbling here and there upon facts which ought to modify, and which must modify, our convictions of duty.

Every day by wire and by mail there come to me from my own State increased evidence of the belief that the purchasing clause of the Sherman law is primarily, if not largely, responsible for the present panic. What matters it, sir, whether that be true or not; what matters it whether these beliefs be well or ill founded? Belief in such case is as hurtful as reality. Of all the wild vagaries to which the human intellect is subject, causeless panic is the most unreasonable. An alarm of fire is heard in a theater or a crowded hall. The alarm is false, but the panic is real. "We are flanked," flies along the lines in the fury of battle, and without a moment's reflection, without a single effort to ascertain the truth, the bravest battalions at times break in wild and senseless panic.

Mr. President, the Sherman law, rightfully or wrongfully, justly or unjustly, in public estimation is the alarming agency which has brought the chill, frozen the currents, and stilled the heart-throbs of trade. Sir, it is perfectly immaterial to the argument whether its effects be reasonable or unreasonable. It is perfectly immaterial to the argument whether they were legitimate or have been systematically procured by designing men, as has been repeatedly charged on this floor. It is immaterial, I say, how it comes. The great fact, the momentous fact, still stands that it is the pernicious



agent which has made men who have hitherto loaned money withdraw it and hide it; which has produced the distrust, the rush upon the banks, the deadly paralysis. It is the murderer, guilty of the blood of public confidence, and ought to die.

Mr. President, two plans are suggested for executing this criminal.

The amendment proposes bimetallism and repeal simultaneously. It is not necessary for me to say, I trust, that I would unhesitatingly support and vastly prefer this amendment, if prompt and favorable action upon it by both Houses of Congress were practicable or possible. But with a majority in the other end of this Capitol uncompromisingly committed to unconditional repeal, what Senator in this Chamber is sanguine enough to promise the country that we can agree upon a coinage bill, or any conditional bill, for weeks or months to come? In the meantime, while we delay, the condition of the whole country grows more and more alarming. In the meantime, while we delay, Southern cotton is seeking a market, with few buyers except foreign houses or their agents, and the price falls far below the cost of production.

In the meantime, while we delay, unhappy growers of that great staple, with hope almost gone and treading on the very verge of bankruptcy and despair, are imploring us to take some action, and without delay. Sir, standing in the deep shadows of these impending and immeasurable disasters, I can not consent to vote for any measure which involves additional delay, because the other branch of Congress is committed against it. I can not, therefore, and for that reason only, support that amendment. The majority bill for repeal means no delay, because the other branch of

Congress is for repeal. I therefore, and for that reason, support it.

Mr. President, our friends who oppose unconditional repeal believe that the Sherman law is not wholly or largely responsible for the condition of the country, and that repeal of that law will therefore fail to bring relief; that unconditional repeal under the circumstances is an extreme measure without any or at least sufficient compensating results.

In reply to the last suggestion, I beg to say that considering the certain damage done by this law to bimetallism, and the possible damage done by it in aiding the panic, no adverse action we could take with it could be extreme. But even if repeal be so regarded, the answer is that extreme remedies are often the essence of conservatism. Let me illustrate by the laws of nature, which are always conservative.

When the forest is uprooted by the storm or shivered by the lightning's bolts, these remedies would be regarded from a human standpoint as extreme; but when we remember that they were needed to stir the deadly calm and to sweep away by the tornado's wing the poisons lurking in the stagnant air, we begin to appreciate their value. Sir, the deadly calm and the stagnation in business are all around us. The Sherman law, in public estimation, is the pernicious agency that has caused the depression. If its removal will start the slightest healthful current it is our duty to apply the remedy. Suppose it be admitted, for the sake of argument, that its repeal will not accomplish all that is needed to restore the country to its normal and healthful condition; and I am one of those who believe that it is but the first step toward relief. Are we to refuse to take any step until in the laboratory of Congress we can concoct all the physic which the