

The Commoner

ISSUED MONTHLY

Entered at the Postoffice at Lincoln, Nebraska, as second-class matter.

WILLIAM J. BRYAN CHARLES W. BRYAN Editor and Proprietor Associate Ed. and Publisher

One Year \$1.00 Three Months .25 Six Months .50 Single Copy .15 In Clubs of Five or more, per year. .75 Sample Copies Free. Foreign Post, 25c Extra

SUBSCRIPTIONS can be sent direct to The Commoner. They can also be sent through newspapers which have advertised a clubbing rate, or through local agents, where such agents have been appointed. All remittances should be sent by post-office money order, express order, or by bank draft on New York or Chicago. Do not send individual checks, stamps, or currency.

RENEWALS—The date on your wrapper shows the time to which your subscription is paid. Thus January 16, means that payment has been received to and including the issue of January, 1916.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS—Subscribers requesting a change of address must give old as well as new address.

ADVERTISING—Rates will be furnished upon application.

Address all communications to— THE COMMONER, LINCOLN, NEB.

Now that the Austrian war cloud has disappeared the preparedness fever ought to show signs of abatement.

If there is no other way to carry our officials safely, why not take them on battleships? Better that than risk belligerent vessels.

Wonder if the men who attended the Roosevelt dinner were also at the Manhattan club dinner? They are the kind of men who work both sides so long as they can advance their schemes for making money.

Every belligerent ship sunk is an additional reason why Americans should not be permitted to travel on the ships of the warring nations. Can we afford to permit a few Americans to drag this country to the verge of war?

If conscription is opposed in Great Britain after eighteen months of the most horrible war the world has ever known, why do the jingoes think universal military service would be popular in this country in time of peace?

When you are enjoying that palatable article of food, the potato, just remember that the army experts would ask you to expend ANNUALLY upon the army a sum more than 50 per cent greater than the value of the entire potato crop of the United States.

The government has on hand and in course of manufacture, more than 700,000 rifles and 250,000,000 cartridges. This is more than enough to equip all the jingoes who would enlist. They would probably prefer to use gas bombs—they are more familiar with them.

The friends of militarism and frenzied preparedness are very indignant because "civilian judgment" is substituted for "the scientific conclusions of the general board of the navy and the general staff of the army." Too bad that those who represent the tax-payers should differ from those who make war a profession. If, before the adoption of frenzied preparedness the militarists are impudent enough to question the right of the tax-payers to a voice in determining the amount of the appropriations, what will be their insolence if their advice is followed and this government is turned over to those who make a business of war?

IF THE COMMONER IS DOING YOU A SERVICE BY OPPOSING MILITARISM, YOU COULD BE OF SERVICE TO YOURSELF AND TO YOUR NEIGHBORS BY EXTENDING THE COMMONER'S CIRCULATION IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD. NEW YEARLY SUBSCRIPTIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AT 60c EACH.

A Sample of Non-Partisanship

Just before congress adjourned for the holidays a resolution was passed extending the war tax for another year—and it was done by a strict party vote. Every republican voted "No." Is this the kind of non-partisanship we are to expect when the President's preparedness plan comes before congress. If the republicans vote against a war tax NECESSARY TO PREVENT A DEFICIT IN THE RUNNING EXPENSES OF THE GOVERNMENT, are they likely to support any revenue measure proposed by the democrats as an adjunct to the preparedness program? Are the republicans likely to be more willing to surrender their high tariff views in behalf of preparedness for imaginary wars than they are for the running expenses of the government?

If the vote on the extension resolutions signifies anything it signifies that the preparedness program will fail because of disagreement on the taxes necessary to carry out the plan. The republicans will insist upon the return to a protective tariff, to which the democrats can not afford to agree; and the democrats will insist on putting the burden upon large incomes, to which the republicans, having large incomes, would naturally object.

Well, while the preparedness program ought to be defeated on its merits, or rather because of its lack of merits, defeat will be acceptable, even if it results from an irreconciled difference of opinion as to the methods to be employed in raising the revenue required by the preparedness program.

W. J. BRYAN.

A WARNING FROM THE PHOENIX

The Phoenix (published by Michael Monohan of South Norwalk, Conn.) contains the following very sensible warning in its November issue:

"Don't forget this, Mr. Plain Citizen:—The fellows who are shouting the loudest for war and whose hearts are bleeding to death for the national honor, have no idea of doing any real fighting themselves—not if they know it! It's YOU for the bloody fray and the human Omelette business, while these wise patriots will go on safely publishing newspapers or cutting coupons in Wall street. Militarism is alright—it depends on the end of it you get!"

Well said. The war urged by the manufacturers of munitions and the jingo press is for YOU to fight while they make money out of the war.

On another page will be found a communication from Judge Weakley of Birmingham, one of the leading prohibition democrats of the south. He is right in protesting against the attempt of the wet democrats to control the delegation from dry states. Prohibition states should be represented by prohibition democrats. No real friend of the President will put him in the position of opposing prohibition in the states that have adopted it.

Already hints are being dropped by the big manufacturers that after the European war ends American labor will have to accept lower wages because in the effort to hold the foreign commerce they have been able to secure through the paralysis of German and British overseas trade they will have to sell at lower prices. They are asking in the meantime, in order to keep out the flood of cheap goods that will be loosed when the war ends and money is wanted, that the tariff be raised. This would debar labor from any benefits in the way of lower prices at home for what it consumed. The big manufacturers' idea of prosperity is large profits for himself and a job for the laborer at whatever wages it can induce him to work for. Labor likes a job, but it also likes a wage that leaves something above mere sustenance.

No one can gain an accurate idea of whether the country is prosperous or not by listening to the complaints of those whose selfish interests have been interfered with by legislation, but if you are interested in a real index note that the production of motor car vehicles in 1915 was nearly 900,000, or 30 per cent more than the previous year, while the production for the current year is conservatively estimated at 1,200,000.

HENRY FORD'S APPEAL TO EUROPEAN NATIONS

The appeal which Henry Ford sent to the rulers of the nations involved in the war was sent by wireless to the New York Sun, December 13. It is as follows:

"Peace ship appeal to European rulers. To His Majesty.

"Sire: We come in this time of trouble, not to add to your burdens, but to help lift them; not to consider which nations are most to blame for the disaster that has befallen Europe, but to end the strife; not to intrude ourselves upon your national life and national ideals, but rather with an earnest desire to understand them and a heartfelt wish to aid in realizing them.

"The love of country, for which every day tens of thousands of lives are sacrificed, is the same in every land. Your nation, like the peoples of all the other belligerent countries, is fighting for its national existence and its best national traditions, and so there can be no irreconcilable differences.

"Such common ideals surely must afford a basis upon which to establish a magnanimous and honorable peace. The men and women of your country and of all the warring countries have proved their loyalty. Enough blood has been shed, enough agony endured and enough destruction wrought.

"The time has come to stop the bloodshed, to save the people from further slaughter, and the civilization of the world from anarchy and ruin.

"Has not war been tried enough in sixteen months of fighting? Is it not proved that war can not solve problems but that it leads only to loss and misery? Must more lives be crushed and more wives and mothers bereaved before we recognize that Europe is bleeding to death and that the grievous wound must be staunched?

"The rising desire of the people of neutral nations to convert a barren disinterestedness into active good will has prompted the citizens of the United States of America to sail for Europe on the steamship Oscar II, with the serious purpose of joining with citizens of the European neutral nations in an organized effort to help restore peace upon an honorable basis.

"To facilitate direct negotiations between you and the other warring nations, we neutrals are about to join a conference which shall, without delay, frame and submit simultaneously to you and all the other belligerent nations proposals as a basis for discussion leading to the final settlement.

"Therefore we earnestly entreat you and the rulers of all the other warring nations to declare an immediate truce. Let the armies stand still where they are. Then let negotiations proceed so that the soldiers may be delivered from another bitter winter in the trenches and sent back to their labors and their firesides. As there is no other way to end the war except by mediation and discussion, why waste one more precious human life for the sake of humanity?"

"HENRY FORD."

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

(Written for the memoirs of Booker T. Washington.)

Booker T. Washington has rendered a very large service to his race and by doing so has been distinctly useful to his country. He has made his impression upon many and this impression will be felt for generations to come.

For the benefit of those who study his life, I venture to report a meeting which I had with him on April 30th, 1915. I was delivering a speech at Carnegie hall, New York, in favor of total abstinence, and at the conclusion of my remarks, circulated a pledge among the audience. It read, "We, the undersigned, promise, God helping us, never to use intoxicating liquor as a beverage." When I took my seat the audience called for Washington and I then learned that Booker T. Washington was on the stage. He came forward and made a brief speech, in the course of which he said that he had signed the pledge above mentioned, adding that his people, meaning the members of his race, had suffered more from the use of intoxicating liquor than from any other cause.

It has given me pleasure to report this testimony to colored men of influence and they have used it in urging total abstinence. I have wondered whether it might not be advisable for the colored leaders interested in the temperance cause to take this pledge and circulate it among their people, describing it as the Booker T. Washington pledge, it being the form of the pledge which he signed.

W. J. BRYAN.