

Baker, Idealist War Maker

Backed by the President, the Secretary of War Courageously Faces His Critics—Striking Contrast in Personality and Methods With Noted Predecessors—Transforming a Pacifist Nation Into a Fighting Army.

By Samuel M. Williams.

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ABOVE all other characteristics, the inspiring motive and dominating impulse in Secretary of War Baker is idealism—an idealism he strives to work out along practical lines.

Between him and his predecessors there is a gulf of widest theoretical dimensions. No two men could be farther apart than Baker and Stanton, that irascible, unsentimental and essentially practical Secretary who guided the War Department through the Civil War.

There are to be found many symptoms in common with the cold, unemotional, clearly defined methods of Elihu Root, to whom army traditions have assigned the pedestal of "the greatest of Secretaries."

A very commonplace type of man outwardly is Baker, who today has the centre of the Nation's stage with the spotlight of public controversy upon him.

There is nothing of the heroic, the grandiose, or even the aggressive about him. On the contrary, he is undersized physically, careless of conventionalities, easy going in methods and seemingly indifferent to system or rigid routine.

In fact, Baker personifies in many respects the exact opposite of what is drilled into soldiers—discipline, precision, directness of speech and action, attention to minute details and, above all, unalterable opposition to sentiment and all forms of the "sluff" in war times.

In his office at the War Department, or before a committee of Congress, Secretary Baker is either indifferent to appearances or purposely tries to be different from the average man.

He has two favorite poses. One is to tilt back in a swivel chair, with hands clasped behind his head and his feet on top of a desk.

The other is to curl one leg up in his chair and sit on it, dangling the other leg loosely, with his body hunched and twisted in smallest possible space.

Always he is negligently puffing a little old pipe, a cigarette or a cigar.

In the first attitude he presents a sort of Bolshevik defiance to War Office tradition, and in the other he exemplifies a streak of Bohemian freedom from conventions.

Washington correspondents who called on him his first day in office still recall their astonishment at his postures and the carefully nurtured pansy blossom that occupied the most prominent place on his desk.

These are mere outward peculiarities, little hobbies of eccentricity, not born of ignorance or lack of culture.

All men have them in one form or another, and the higher they climb into official position and public scrutiny the more accentuated these mannerisms appear.

But there is another side to Mr. Baker, the inner side that reveals an unusual intellect, an exceptionally clear mind and a rare ability to express elevated thoughts in simple words.

No one would call him a brilliant orator like Bryan, nor a master stylist like President Wilson. Rather, he has command of that kind of speech which inspires, fascinates and moves audiences.

It is hard for the skeptic to hold out against him. There is no hammering of argument, no violent gesture, no thundering peroration, but an insidious appeal to reason aimed at the best that is in man, a gentle touch of humanity intermingled always with a marshalled array of cardinal facts that seem to be ready in mind.

In Washington there are many verdicts on Mr. Baker. By some he is called a pacifist at heart and out of sympathy with Sherman's view of war and the way to end it.

But there is no evidence of pacifism in his revelation of America's gigantic preparation for war that the Secretary gave yesterday on the witness stand before the Senate Committee.

By others he is styled a Socialist. But if there is a leaning toward Socialism he is kin to Jaures and Viviani and those other Frenchmen who modified their theories to practical accomplishments.

Still other critics call Baker indifferently a dreamer, an uplifter, an impractical theorist who puts too much trust in the intentions of men, and glosses over with glittering words symptoms that require drastic treatment and the surgeon's knife rather than the salve of optimism.

But all these criticisms leave him unchanged in manner and undaunted in his idealism.

Between President Wilson and Secretary Baker there is a closer intimacy of understanding and harmony of ideals than possibly the President has with any other member of the Cabinet.

It is an anomaly to have a man of the Baker type and temperament at the head of the War Department at this time—not a soldier, not an efficiency expert, not a business wizard, but an idealist who marshals an army of more than a million men in a few months; a reformer who turns a free people into conscripts; a humanitarian who makes arms and munitions to kill and devastate.

No one can criticize Mr. Baker for lack of courage or of determination to see the war through to the triumph of America. Whatever his previous predilections and his personal inclinations, whatever the alleged failures of administration, the Baker facing Senatorial critics was strong, vigorous, daring, even aggressive, and stood forth as a master administrator who has accomplished many wonderful things in the process of transforming a pacifist and unprepared Nation into an army rushing to war.

Civil War Prices And Prices of Food During This War

PEACE will not lower prices immediately, as many people now struggling with the high cost of living fondly hope. After the close of the Civil War New York continued to pay wartime prices, save in certain few items that were immediately affected by peace.

Even a year and a half after Lee's surrender wheat and meat were still double their pre-war price. Wheat was even higher than today. But there was no Mr. Hoover in the Civil War period.

A special report to Congress in October, 1865, stated that eighty leading articles showed an average of nearly 90 per cent. above prices before war began. Rents were about on the same average, while wages remained 60 per cent. up.

The two highest articles on the list were gold and cotton, the first standard of Northern values and the latter commodity king of the South.

New York's cost of living was highest in October, 1865, six months after peace. Some wholesale quotations at the time were: Flour, \$14.50 a barrel; coal, \$13 a ton; kerosene \$1 a gallon; brown sugar, 15 cents a pound; powdered sugar, 22 cents; butter 40 cents; coffee, 55 cents; tea, 90 cents to \$1.25 a pound.

This date corresponds with the period of highest monetary inflation. War's high prices are caused partly by increased demand and consumption, but principally by expansion and inflation of currency, which lessen the purchasing power of the paper dollar.

Peace checks demands, but financial inflation still continues and keeps up prices.

On Jan. 1, 1866, eight months after Appomattox, the national debt of the North was \$74.28 per capita, and Federal taxes \$11.48 for each individual. Gold, that had reached its highest premium of 235 on July 17, 1864, was still quoted at 150 to 200. It was several years falling to parity, and more than ten years before full specie payment was resumed.

The greater the monetary inflation the higher the rise in market prices and the longer must be the period of readjustment after war is over. Peace will not give New Yorkers cheaper food, clothing and rents right away, nor even let loose ample supplies of wheat and meat.

Europe will have to be fed a whole year after arms are laid down, while her new crops are being raised.

In the South after the Civil War food continued scarce and high for a long time, while cotton two years later because of destroyed fields was 30 cents a pound, or nearly three times normal.

It is some relief to find that the great commodities to fall in price in these days were coal, wool, corn and coffee. These cannot be taken as a safe criterion for conditions after this war.

Corn is now more nearly on a parity with wheat as a food, and coffee is one of the few articles that has risen very little during this war. Anthracite coal in Philadelphia tumbled 23 cents a ton, and bituminous in Cleveland went down 45 cents a ton in 1905.

Such a fall would be welcomed now. If economic causes and effects of previous war times hold good in these modern times, the tremendous monetary inflation in European countries, and to a smaller extent the currency expansion of the United States, indicate a long continued period of high prices.

The Evening World Daily Magazine

The Big Men in the Day's News

SECRETARY OF WAR BAKER IN PEN SKETCHES BY HARMONY



"WHAT IS SO RARE AS A DAY IN JUNE?" Why, a Hunk of Coal in January!

If Coal Is a Vegetarian Product, Philosopher "Bugs" Says He Will Vote the Straight Cannibal Ticket—Coalless Mondays Must Be Blamed on Flat Arches of the Transportation.

BY ARTHUR ("BUGS") BAER.

THE bird who wanted to know what was so rare as a day in June aimed his toes for the moon before the coal barons got a chance to wise him up.

One thing that is rarer than a day in June is a hunk of coal in January. Nobody seems to know why coal is so scarce, which is probably the reason why it is scarce. If somebody knew something about it we might be able to fix the terrible smear without hitting our thumbs more than eleven times with the hammer.

According to the gent who crocheted the dictionary, coal is an amorphous substance knitted from vegetation of the prehistoric age. Judging from the present price of coal that vegetation must have been oblique salad, Brussels sprouts and stuffed tomatoes a la Tiffany.

If the public had a squawk in the matter they would have manufactured coal out of cheaper vegetation, like stewed cabbage, middle-aged carrots and second-hand onions.

This vegetarian dinner was lying in the downstairs office of the earth about 1,000,000 years before the coal barons got their lunch hooks on it. The coal was lying for a million years, and the barons started in lying just where the coal left off.

When they have only a little coal they refuse to ship it because it won't pay the freight charges.

And when they have a lot of coal they won't ship it because there would be too many freight charges.

POOR RICHARD JR.

Friend, do not allow thy good intentions to be stymied by thy habits. Racing may be the sport of kings, but the bookies seemeth to always holdeth aces. Thou canst not saveth eggs by eating omelets. The sluggish considereth not the ant. Unless it is in his beef stew.

The Kaiser is still chewing on the first bite he took out of the world. Seems his eyes were bigger than his stomach. Name of Bolshevik paper is Babochiv Pat. Sounds like something you should be vaccinated for. Chances of peace are scarcer than second hand Fords. Mr. Roosevelt is still giving his energy to the Bull Moose Party. Which is something like giving bird-seed to a stuffed canary. This war has been a total failure for the Crown Prince. Nobody has even asked him what tailor makes his uniforms. They seem to have leopard prohibition in the Nation's capital. Dry in spots. You can get a drink between the spots. Gent wants to know how to pronounce Gen. Skiznkvx. You don't. Dandelions happen to be the first water that a Turk ever fought for.

Can a Fish Frozen in the Ice Be Restored to Life?

OCCASIONALLY a "fish" story gets into circulation which has such a scientific flavor that it challenges the credulity of even the very well informed. To this class, says Popular Science Monthly, belongs the story of the resurrection of a fish called the "Chindagaka," which, it is reported, will come to life again after having lain frozen solid in the ice for months. According to the authorities connected with the United States Fish Commission, the Chindagaka is a newcomer not only into the field of fish literature but also into the lists of known species. None of the experts on US Commission had heard of it before. They declare that when a fish is entirely frozen, life is extinct, though it is possible for a fish to appear to be frozen when its flesh is only stiffened from the cold. The fish is still alive, and will, of course, revive gradually when placed in water of the proper temperature. Even this will happen only to a fish which has been caught through a hole in the ice and left lying exposed on the ice surface until it has become stiffened from the cold. HIGH-POWER PERFUMES. ALTHOUGH the Arabs about Aden love perfumes, they wouldn't buy the German brands because they were too weak. Their favorite is "oodi," which they make themselves. It is burned as an incense and is so strong that its odor remains in clothes even after they have been laundered.

Winning Out Before Forty

How One Young Man Refused a Career to Take a Job and What He Did With It—Walter C. Teagle, Standard Oil President, Now Among Youngest Executives in the First Rank of Big Business.

By James C. Young

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AT what age in life should a man expect success? The boy in his teens looks ahead to the day when he will be a man as marking the horizon of achievement.

The very young man sets thirty as his mark, and he who is a little older mentally decides that forty is the time when he will get to the top.

Forty years seems to be the true turning point on the upward road. This may be proved by a glance at some of the country's ablest men and their past struggles.

Not all of them have won by the time they were forty, but a great many of this conspicuous group were well on the way. And there are others who emphatically have laid hold of power by the end of their two score years.

The career of almost no other living American exemplifies this fact so well as that of Walter C. Teagle, President of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, greatest institution in the world of its kind.

He will not have reached his fortieth birthday until the first day of May. His elevation to this position dates from last November, when he was just thirty-nine.

Mr. Teagle's years have been filled with a larger share of hard work than falls to most men. No doubt that is one of the reasons why he can look back at forty upon a record of progression that covers half of his life.

Always Took the Lead. He is a native of Cleveland, Ohio, born there in 1878, the son of parents who came from old and substantial American stock.

As a lad he attended local schools, then entered Cornell University. At that period he began to show a quality for leadership which was to become more strongly emphasized with the advance of time.

It took a prominent part in athletics and other collegiate activities. It seemed to be a matter of coincidence that he usually was the fellow called upon to manage things—to get men together—to bear the burden.

Then came the time of his graduation. A member of the Cornell faculty was attracted by his aptitude in chemistry and proposed to him that he return another year to qualify for a professorship.

He was to get \$600 the next term to serve as instructor, with the assurance of the better position after that time.

But young Teagle took his degree of Bachelor in Science and went back to Cleveland. He had a job waiting there. It was not much of a job, considering the alternate opportunity.

He took it just the same—firing a still in an oil plant at nineteen cents an hour. Accident had so arranged things that the plant belonged to his father. But that made very little difference to the son.

He worked and strived, suffered and endured with his fellows. Perhaps he thought a little more clearly than many of them, for in the course of time he began to progress—and has been progressing ever since.

New Horizons. The elder Teagle's firm was merged with the Republic Oil Company in 1900, and his son went with the old business, becoming Vice President of the new.

He already possessed a good grip of the work. The position brought with it enlarged opportunities. These he turned to account, and in three years was called to a responsible post in the export department of the Standard Oil Company.

Next he went abroad, studying the methods of other lands, enlarging his own varied experience. Then he was placed in charge of exports to certain foreign fields. Business developed rapidly; so did Mr. Teagle.

He received appointment as the man in charge of all the Standard's export trade. Here was a young man in his early thirties running a world business involving millions. And he did it with a thoroughness that made records.

Still Climbing. In 1910 he was elected a director of the company and subsequently made one of its Vice Presidents. Things moved along in the same successful channels as before. The year 1913 brought with it his designation to be President of the Imperial Oil Company, Limited, an important subsidiary of the Standard.

Then in 1915 he was made President of the International Petroleum Company. And now, in 1918, he has direction of what is perhaps the most comprehensive organization ever gotten together—commercial or otherwise.

Personally, this youthful executive of big business is a man who talks little, with a serious face, which reflects concentrated power. He is known for his modesty and avoidance of frills. Those who come in contact with him say that he is a very human sort of man—but one who is forever and ever bent to his task, thinking up new ways to do new things and better ways to speed along the old.

Such is the career of one man who has won out before forty. The story of others will be published here from time to time.

Each telephone in New York City is now connected with a meter or registering machine located at the exchange headquarters in the zone in which the telephone is installed. Each telephone has its own meter. These meters record the calls made by each subscriber, and this is accomplished by the telephone operator pushing a button when a complete circuit has been given. These meters are small in size, being about 3 1/2 x 4 inches.

The purpose of this bill is to compel the telephone companies to place these meters at the residences or offices of the subscribers, so that they may have a visible record of the calls for which they are practically charged.

It has been practically conceded that to compel the telephone company to render an itemized bill would work an intolerable hardship upon the telephone company. At a recent hearing before the Commissioners it was brought out that the telephone company was not cognizant of mechanical devices in use in neighboring States, which record calls to the mutual satisfaction of the subscriber and the telephone company. This was a startling surprise to those present.

The present system invites carelessness and negligence on the part of telephone operators and affords an operator an opportunity to subject punishment upon a subscriber for real or fancied grievances by ringing up the meter as many extra times as the operator may see fit, and with little or no chance of detection.

By Assemblyman William C. Amos. This bill is of peculiar and direct interest to the telephone subscribers resident in New York City. Complaints of overcharge have grown in volume until there has been created a situation that the telephone companies themselves should seek by every available means to correct. This bill is constructive. I look upon the telephone company as a marvel of efficiency. However, the human element which enters into the operation of its recording instruments is not sufficiently guarded to protect the interests of the subscriber. This bill does not impose a hardship upon the telephone company. It simply points the way to a practical method of satisfying the subscriber's demand for a method of accounting that is not, as it is now, all one-sided. A subscriber under the present system employed by the telephone company in conducting its affairs, is unable to obtain an itemized bill and has no means of demanding an adjustment.

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