

Bryan Analyzes Record.

Commoner Tells of Wonderful Accomplishments of the Wilson Administration.—"A Record Without a Parallel," Says Mr. Bryan, and the Kicker Agrees.

The Kicker has received Bryan's Commoner for September and, to one who understands how to take it, the stuff in the Commoner is both interesting and amusing. It illustrates the character of man who may become "prominent" in capitalist society.

In mentioning the "achievements" of the Wilson administration, Mr. Bryan says "it is a record without a parallel." The peculiar feature about this statement is its truth. The highest mark touched by any former administration was the "billion dollar congress." The congress just adjourned made it near two billion dollars.

Curiously enough, Mr. Bryan is mum about this. He says nothing about the surrender of the government treasury to the munition makers and war lords. Mr. Bryan is a pacifist and could not easily harmonize such action with his "Prince of Peace" chataqua lecture.

Nor does Mr. Bryan mention the recently enacted conscription law among the "achievements." In England, under a king, and in the midst of the greatest war the world has ever known, conscription raised a howl that was heard around the world. But here, in "free" America, where "the people" rule, conscription was slipped thru congress in time of peace, and the overwhelming majority will not know of the law until they are drafted into the army. Among other things, this also proves the value of our kept newspapers as public informers. And the Commoner is by no means an exception.

Mr. Bryan uses up nearly a page in telling of the good things the Democrats have done for the common people. I hope you won't faint when I tell you that the first great achievement he mentions is the Democratic tariff! Mr. Bryan doesn't say that this new wrinkle of a tariff is entirely satisfactory, but assures us that "it has lessened the power of the tariff barons to exact tribute from the public." He doesn't say how? But anybody can get the meaning who buys at the store.

The second great achievement of the Democrats, according to Mr. Bryan, is the income tax. We have been 15 years getting this law. It is an amendment to the national constitution and had to be sanctioned by the legislatures of two-thirds of the states. And Republican states as well as Democratic voted its adoption. But after it was in effect two years, it was found that the tax was being shamefully evaded, and an effort was made to remedy this by enacting a publicity law. BUT CONGRESS VOTED IT DOWN!

The third good thing the Democrats did was the regional banking system. Mr. Bryan says "it breaks Wall Street's despotic hold." Yet the head and front of this system is Wall Street. Ask the cotton farmers of the South what the "Cotton Pool" did to them two years ago? All of you who have been benefited by the regional bank, hold up your hands.

Next comes rural credits. The farmer will be poked full of this next month. The Kicker told you something about this law a few weeks ago. Mr. Bryan says "it is a fitting companion to the regional bank law." I guess that is the truth.

Fifth, Mr. Bryan tells us that the working man has been taken care of by the Clayton law, and he tells us this just about a week after the courts had knocked this law beyond recognition.

It is interesting to learn that the Democrats enacted an anti-trust law which, according to Mr. Bryan, "Not only gives a measure of relief from trust extortion, but it includes a provision which protects the working men from government by injunction."

I feel sure that workmen would rather have a taste of the gravy than to read about it. When the general strike on the railroads threatened, it was in Mr. Bryan's own state where government by injunction was resorted to. That was only a month ago. Didn't he know of it? And in almost any day of it? On any day, you can read of government by injunction. That is a weapon the employers will not surrender so long as capitalism endures—no matter what the pillers may write in a book. We are ruled by courts.

The plutes, through their politicians, are always doing something for labor. They are willing to do almost anything for their workers—except get off their backs. Another "achievement" of which Mr. Bryan is very proud, is the recent child labor law enacted by congress. He says: "The child labor law has come in response to the growing demand for social betterment. The fact that such a law was necessary is a sad commentary upon the heartlessness of man—that he should become so money-mad as

to be willing to increase his profits by the stunting of the bodies and the dwarfing of the minds of minors. The Democratic party deserves great credit for adding this law to its extraordinary record of great accomplishments."

So says Mr. Bryan, the arch deceiver of those who believe in him. He laments the fact that such a law should be necessary, but he DOES NOT tell us that congress worked off a gold brick on the children by slipping in a joker that nullifies the law. On its face the law appears to prevent the shipment of goods produced by child labor. But Mr. Bryan carefully conceals the joker, which provides that the law does not apply to goods manufactured for more than 30 days! Why did Mr. Bryan conceal so important a fact—if he is honest? The Milwaukee Leader, edited by ex-congressman Burger, says:

"The Collection of Humorists that has just adjourned after a long session under the dome of the national capital, played a bright, practical joke on the working children. It is so funny that all hell must have laughed when the news reached there."

"This congress passed a child labor law. It passed this law only after years of lobbying by labor unions and reform organizations. Its passage was hailed as another great milestone on the road to labor's emancipation. Labor leaders, like Gompers, ranked this law with the famous 'labor-is-no-commodity' clause in the Clayton trust act. Now it seems that this ranking is about right and that it is some rank, too."

"The law pretended to make interstate trade in the products of child-labor illegal. It was supposed to be aimed directly at the cotton mills of the south and the spinning factories of the north. 'Now it is discovered that someone played a joke on the children by slipping in an amendment providing that the law does not apply to products that have been produced more than 30 days. All that a manufacturer has to do to get his laugh out of the law is to store his goods 30 days before shipping. No matter if he robbed the cradle for his labor power the taint is removed after 30 days.'"

There is nothing in the Democratic record of which the devil himself would not be ashamed. No doubt we will again be told to "God Bless Wilson" for keeping the country out of war. Wilson did nothing of the kind. It was an aroused public that refused to stand for it. Ask your congressman how he was smothered with letters and telegrams protesting against war?

Hasn't Wilson twice tried to invade Mexico, and hasn't he got our army there now? Didn't Bryan quit his post because he saw that Wilson was needlessly trying to plunge us into war with Germany?

Why is Mr. Bryan now so quiet about these eventful times? The ultimatum to Germany that he refused to sign as secretary of state, has never been made public. Why does not Mr. Bryan tell us what it contained that caused him to quit? The note that was sent and made public after Mr. Bryan quit containing nothing more serious than the previous one which Mr. Bryan did sign?

But Mr. Bryan is chiefly concerned about labor. For 15 years he has acted as the decoy duck for the Donks, speaking of the recent 8-hour law Mr. Bryan says: "Again the president has taken the side of the common man and won."

Last week the Kicker said: "It is my opinion that the railway heads knew exactly what the president and congress would do when they refused to yield anything."

On the day on which the Kicker was mailed out appeared a press dispatch from New York telling of a meeting of the railway heads. Among other things I find this passage in the dispatch: "It became known that not a small percentage of the railroad presidents in the committee who were bitter against President Wilson three weeks ago, and when the eight-hour law was passed to head off the railway brotherhoods from a national strike, will vote for the president in November. A soft pedal has been put upon the talk about the 'outrageousness' of the law."

See the cat? The opposition of the railway heads was all in the play, it now appears. "The soft pedal has been put on the outrageousness of the law." And "not a small per cent of the presidents will support Wilson, according to the dispatch. The dispatch then goes on to tell why this sudden change of attitude toward Mr. Wilson, and concludes: "President Wilson promised when congress adjourned that at the short session he would advo-

cate the remainder of the strike-settlement program, which included COMPULSORY INVESTIGATION LAW and an assurance for the railroads they would be able to recompense themselves by higher freight rates for the additional cost of the eight-hour day."

Instead of "compulsory investigation" the proper term is compulsory arbitration. That is what the railroads want, and that is what the president promised them. The president also promised that any increased cost of operating expenses might be saddled on the public in higher rates—although the railroad earnings today are greater than at any time in the history of the nation. Compulsory arbitration will tie labor hand and foot. It will make their only weapon, the strike, illegal.

Thus I have given you a brief review of Democratic achievements. If any Democrat thinks I have not been fair, he is entitled to free space to show up my unfairness. It is what Mr. Bryan calls "A Record Without a Parallel." And on this we agree.

However, I hope that because I have shown up the Wilson administration, no one will suspect that I have a better opinion of the other twin Mr. Hughes has not made so much of a record, but what there is of it is just like Wilson's—so far as serving the rich and d-bouncing labor is concerned. He is now also a "friend of labor." But he was also one of the federal judges who robbed the striking Danbury hatters of their little savings and their homes, because they instituted a boycott against their masters.

As governor of New York Mr. Hughes proved his friendship for the railroads by vetoing the 2-cent fare law enacted by the legislature, and he proved his loyalty to all Big Business by his opposition to the income tax. There is nothing in his record to indicate that he has any sympathy for the masses. Mr. Rockefeller contributed \$200,000 to help make Mr. Hughes governor of New York.

It is pretty generally known that the affairs of this country are controlled by two powerful groups of capitalists. These are known as the Morgan group and the Rockefeller group. The Morgan group is the one profiting most from the sale of munitions to Europe. Mr. Wilson will set a day of prayer for peace, but he will not put an embargo on the sale of Morgan's murder machines—without which the war would lose much of its horror, if it did not stop entirely. Nor did Mr. Wilson protest when the Morgan group loaned the allies a half billion dollars! On the contrary he gave government approval. It is the House of Morgan that now pulls the strings at the White House.

To change to Hughes would put the strings in the hands of the House of Rockefeller. Hughes and Rockefeller are "clums." They are brother "Christians." Both belong to the same Baptist church. Here is a great question for the people to decide—whether we shall be ruled by the House of Morgan or the House of Rockefeller during the next four years.

The only escape is to vote for Benson and Kirkpatrick.

A REAL JOKE SHEET. I get the American Issue, the organ of the Prohibitionists, and I enjoy it because of its very narrow vision.

In the last issue appears a double cartoon. One represents a working man going to his shack with a can of beer. The other shows a well-dressed man going to his auto with a can of gasoline. Above the cartoon is printed: "It's a Heap Better and less costly in the long run to buy gasoline instead of rum."

The idea intended to be conveyed is that all working men could have automobiles if they didn't booze. Booze is all that is the matter with the workers. The next time you see a half dozen automobiles lined up in front of a saloon, as is often the case down at the station, don't make the mistake of imagining that their owners are in the saloon absorbing booze. They buy gasoline instead of rum."

RATHER INDEFINITE ISSUE.

The fight this year is not one of blind partisanship: Americanism is the question at issue, and it will be settled right. You may bet on that—Ironton Register. Bro. Ake can render a great service to the electorate by defining the "ishoo." Both Wilson and Hughes have declared for "Americanism," and no doubt it will be "settled" right," as Bro. Ake suggests. But the untutored would like to know what it means?

If you want the truth, you must read the unmuzzled Kicker.

THE CAT IS OUT.

The recent decision of the Massachusetts supreme court has raised a pampus among the more intelligent of the capitalist politicians. This court holds that labor is property. The same doctrine was upheld by the supreme court of the United States in the case of the Danbury hatters. Also in the United States district court of Minnesota in the recent Arkansas coal miners' case.

Senator La Follette of Wisconsin is particularly "raw" over these decisions. Socialism is very strong in Wisconsin, and the senator is no Socialist. The senator says:

"Labor cannot be property unless men are property. It is the exercise of power. The only way to possess labor is to possess the men. THAT MEANS SLAVERY."

Sure it does, Senator. We Socialists have been telling you this all along. The men who must depend upon others for a chance to work, we call "wage-slaves." And we are sustained by the highest courts in the land.

It makes it a little awkward for our capitalist "friends of labor" to have to admit the truth, but there is no way around it. The courts have handed out the law books. No misbranding or adulteration. Labor is the only thing the average worker has to sell. It is his "property." And he cannot separate it from himself. Hence when he sells his labor, HE goes into the bargain.

Of course a law passed by the recent congress says different. It says that labor is not property. But you cannot change facts by law, although our legislative bodies spend little time in trying to do anything else.

"The thought is intolerable," shouts Senator La Follette. "The decision will not stand. The American people will not submit to the yoke!"

Well, they are submitting to it, and not making much noise about it, either. What is it the American people won't stand for? If they will stand for a conscription law in time of peace, the rulers need have no fear of anything else they may do to them.

EXPOSED QUACKS.

The fighting ability of Germany is astonishing the world. Here is a little nation of sixty-five million people holding all Europe at bay—assisted only by a couple of cripples called Austria and Turkey. Russia alone, I think, has more people than Germany and her allies.

Why is Germany so strong? Many reasons have been given, but the real reason has never been told because it would not harmonize with our pretensions. What I consider the reason for the real power of Germany appeared in the Ground Hog, a single tax publication of Cleveland, Ohio.

No man is likely to take up arms in defense of his boarding house. But give him a home and he will fight for it. We hear a great deal about kings, dukes, nobles and so on in Europe, and we imagine they are very wealthy, but when compared to our Morgans, Rockefellers, and so on, they appear as paupers.

According to the figures given by the Ground Hog, the wealthy class of Germany own but two per cent of the wealth of the nation. The middle class owns 54 per cent and the POOR CLASS 44 per cent.

So, in Germany, the poorest class owns nearly half of the wealth—or 44 per cent. In the United States the poorest class owns but five per cent, the middle class 35 per cent, and the upper class, or two per cent of all the people, owns 60 per cent of the nation's wealth.

When the war started, the masses in Germany felt that they had something to fight for. But what have the masses in this country got to raise a row over?

AMERICANISM. President Wilson and Candidate Hughes are each very patriotic gentlemen. Both have declared for "Americanism." What they mean by it, nobody knows. Nor do they say.

At Fort Scott, Kansas, is a college named the People's College. It is devoted to the education of the masses by man. This college is being financed by the contributions of the working class. It has been in existence for several years and is a success. It puts out a monthly publication known as the People's College News. Its Americanism is entirely different from that of Wilson or Hughes. It says:

"We stand for an Americanism that allows no American to gain private gain, to embroil us in war with any nation.

That allows no hungry children in a land overflowing with food.

That allows no long hours of labor while plenty can be provided for all with short hours of labor.

That allows no starting of child life by mill, mine and factory, while idle adults seek the boon of work.

That allows no payment to labor of less than the full value of its product.

That allows no idle slacker to appropriate the fruits of others' toil.

That allows no one man or set of men in any office to plunge our nation into a needless war.

That denies the right of the nation to interfere on behalf of the property of our citizens in any other lands.

That denies the right of our enemies within our borders to make enemies for us without our borders.

That demands to know all the facts upon which our relations with other nations are based.

That will fight no war for reasons upon which we have not passed.

That demands of government that it serve all the people equally.

That will follow no flag for an ignoble purpose.

That stands for a responsible, thinking citizenship.

That stands for no blind obedience.

That stands for our country for all our people.

That do unto other nations as we would they should do unto us, is the essence of statecraft."

THE PREACHER.

Sara Hedley in Saturday Journal. Last eve I sought the nearest church.

And heard a gifted parson preach He talked of men whose days were over.

Two thousand years ago or more; He said no word of those who strive.

In this old world to keep alive, Who fight their battles every day Obscurely, in their feeble way.

I'd just as soon be in the dark, Concerning Father Noah's Ark; I care not for the tents of Baal Or Joseph's corn, or Jonah's whale I'd rather learn something to cheer.

Some hopeless toiler struggling here, Than learn how Pharaoh blew his "dough."

About five thousand years ago.

The things of which the pastor talks

Are dead as Adam's brindle ox; But all around us there are cries And wringing hands and weeping eyes.

He'll have to get his text on straight

And bring his gospel up to date, lead immortal souls down to hell."

WHY THEIR STRENGTH.

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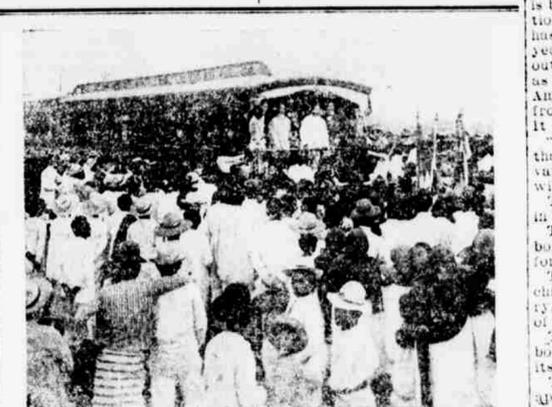
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SOCIALISM AND EQUALITY.

By John Spargo.

No Socialist wants to pull down the strong to the level of the weak, the wise to the level of the less wise. Socialism does not imply pulling anybody down. It does not imply a great plain of humanity with no mountain peaks of genius or character. It is not opposed to natural inequalities, but to man-made inequalities. Its only protest is against these artificial inequalities, products of man's ignorance and greed. It does not aim to pull down the highest, but to lift up the lowest; it does not want to put a load of disadvantage upon the strong and gifted, but it wants to take off the heavy burdens of disadvantage which keep others from rising. In a word, socialism implies nothing more than giving every child born into the world equal opportunities, so that only the inequalities of nature remain.

Stick to the unmuzzled Kicker.



Distributing Free Land in Mexico.

From the Latin-American News Association.

The Revolution in Mexico had, among other purposes, that of the Distribution of Land to millions of Indians who had been deprived of it during the thirty-five years of the Diaz regime. Even under the Spanish conquerors, the Indians were allowed certain zones of land surrounding their villages, and that land was worked by them in community.

The great politicians under Diaz, not satisfied with the money they made by selling concessions of all kinds, took away from the poor Indians, by fair or foul means, the communal lands around their villages, and threw them into practical slavery.

The consummation of that injustice was the cause of the revolution against Diaz, and the Revolution did not stop because Madero came into power, as Madero's family and his ministers did not want to see the land go back to the Indians. General Huerta represented the reactionary powers, which expected to get back all the privileges it enjoyed under Diaz. Mr. Carranza represents the yearnings of millions of Indians, as well as of hundreds of thousands of the middle class and of the working classes.

Some four or five thousand acres of land were distributed to the Indians in Uman, Yucatan, under the direction of General Alvarado. This is the first time in the history of Mexico that lands have been distributed to the Indians. Another distribution took place later, and this proves that the Constitutionalists realize the fact that only through a distribution of land can they put an end to the Revolution.

Why ARE PEOPLE BLIND? There are some things so plain that is seems the blind ought to see. But the mentally blind are more hopeless than the physically blind. The postoffice is the biggest business that is being conducted in the United States. The people get splendid service at cost. Nobody is supposed to profit from the earnings. If there is a loss, the people gladly pay it for they have been the beneficiaries.

The employees are well paid, enjoy all holidays without a reduction in pay, and many of them get an annual two weeks' vacation on full pay.

Did you ever notice the scramble for the job of postmaster, rural carrier or any other place in the postal service?

Or did you ever hear of a strike of postal employees?

Or did you ever hear of "watered stock" or the rise or fall of postage stamps on the stock exchange?

Or did you ever hear of a post-office going into the hands of a receiver or a bankruptcy court?

No, you never heard of any of these things happening, bad as the service is sometimes mismanaged by capitalist politicians, and the loot given the railroads for carrying the mails.

Now, if the government can

successfully operate the postal system, and do it at cost, why can't that same government operate the railroads the same way?

That the government can and does operate railroads is proven over and over again. When the so-called managers bankrupt a railroad, the government takes charge—just as the government is now operating the Frisco.

If the government can take over a looted railroad and run it until it is on its feet again, why can't it take a road that has not been looted and successfully operate it?

A railroad is a public highway. There is no more reason for having these roads in private hands than there is for having our dirt roads or streets in private hands.

This government is operating a railroad in Panama and is building one in Alaska. Neither of these roads is expected to pay expenses. If we can operate roads in Panama and Alaska where they will not pay, why can't we operate them at home where they do pay?

The answer is that private capital wants the profits, and private capital runs the government.

The solidarity of the laborers at the polls means the success of the cause of the workers.