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PREFER PROFITS BEFORE FLAGS

THERE SHOULD by all means be an investigation into the facts connected with the defeat of the merchant marine bill, to enable the American people to understand the conditions surrounding this important measure.

It would be interesting to know what relation to the agitation of the question has been borne by J. P. Morgan & Co., the International Merchant Marine Company, which operates some of the chief lines of transatlantic navigation, and the attitude of other companies which sail ships under foreign flags.

It is passing strange if American ship-owners who fly foreign flags over their ships to avoid the laws of their country can secure the defeat of useful national legislation. The country should be grateful to the New York World, which, in an interesting editorial favoring the shipping bill, directs attention to the influence of shipping interests, that prefer profit before any flag whatever.

WON'T KNOW WHAT SUNK THEM, OR WHO

THE SUBMARINE and the mine promise to bring new complexities to war. Great Britain expresses the opinion that Germany may blow a neutral ship or two out of the water. Germany says it will be just like Great Britain to do that, for the purpose of involving the former with neutrals.

The fact is that a ship may be sunk anywhere in the war zone at sea and nobody have the least idea who is responsible. The periscopes of a submarine does not identify. Frequently not even this is above water, when the fatal torpedo is launched. The very crew of a vessel cannot tell whether it was sunk by a torpedo, by a mine, and sometimes do not know that the explosion may not have been internal. To this very day the United States does not know what happened to the Maine. The British probably do not know whether the Audacious was sunk by a submarine, or by a mine, or whether, if she was torpedoed, one, two or three torpedoes hit her.

The best thing neutral commerce can do is stay out of the areas warned as dangerous.

LEARNING IN A COSTLY SCHOOL

THE CITIZENS are beginning to realize the results of Mayor Wilson's fiscal policy, which began with a proposition to bond for improvements, and lay a fifteen mill tax rate, and which will end in a tax rate of more than twenty mills, and diminished improvements for years to come.

The Board of Apportionment and Taxation has fixed a preliminary rate of 49.5 mills, which it will try to cut to 48 mills. At 48 mills this rate will actually be higher than that of a year ago, which included a mill tax for school houses, and a mill for state tax. In this rate no provision is to be made for state tax, and but half a mill is voted for school houses.

In repeated instances sums which, in the past, would have been met from income are thrown out, to be met from the proceeds of bonds, or not at all.

In the meantime there waits to be issued, when political conditions promise the greatest results from the expenditure of the money, something like \$1,400,000 more of bonds, which, for interest and contributions to principal will require another mill on the tax rate.

But the tax rate is not a true measure of the profligacy of the Wilson administration. That will be found in the figures of the municipal administration before Mayor Wilson took office, and the figures when he goes out.

At the end of his second term it will probably be discovered that the annual expense of administration has been increased by close to a million dollars under his financial program. It will be a costly lesson, but the taxpayers elected to learn it and thus the facts are.

NEW HAVEN'S PROMISE TO BE GOOD AND THE RAILROAD BONDING BILL

THE MOST recent communication from the directorate of the New Haven railroad, is addressed to the Public Utilities Commissions of Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut and reflects a chastened spirit.

It contains a list of corporations from which it has already been separated by a court decree, and from which it is soon to be divorced by sale.

These corporations include many of those of which the Interstate Commerce Commission said:

In the search for truth the commission had to overcome many obstacles, such as the burning of books, letters, documents and the obstinacy of witnesses who declined to testify until criminal proceedings were begun for their refusal to answer questions. The New Haven system had more than 800 subsidiary corporations, in a web of entangling alliances with each other, many of which were seemingly planned, created and manipulated by lawyers expressly retained for purposes of concealment and deception.

Among the properties to be sold are the Boston Holding Co., which was "used in the despoilment of the Boston & Maine," The Rhode Island trolleys "For which a double price was paid.

The Connecticut and Massachusetts trolleys, which were acquired at prices "exorbitantly in excess of their market value. For these, "Millions was wasted that bring an annual deficit, instead of a surplus, and constitute a liability instead of an asset in the New Haven system."

The Westchester acquisition is to be retained. It must ever remain "A story of profligate waste," a railroad which is not only not a necessary part of the New Haven system, but which parallels its already existing line.

"For this property the enormous sum of \$36,434,000 was expended, it is being operated at an annual loss of \$1,250,000 and will have to increase its earning four-and-one-half fold before it can pay its operating expenses and fixed charges."

The steamships also it proposes to keep, the Interstate Commerce Commission permitting. For these it paid \$24,772,416 acquiring a property with a physical value of \$10,000,000.

The Eastern Steamship Company is thrown overboard. It was organized in 1912, to operate certain steamships owned by the New Haven, and is, as the directors remark, now in the hands of a receiver.

Yet, despite all its promises of good behaviour, the New Haven is behind a bill in Hartford, which will permit the railroad and trolley lines of Connecticut to issue bonds to the

amount of double their capital stock, a proposition as profligate, as opposed to public policy, and as injurious to private capital and public credit as any of the reckless legislation under which the railroad system of New England has been wrecked. If this bonding bill should become a law, it will prove that the General Assembly either cannot, or does not care to, learn by experience.

"LIQUOR LOBBY" IS ATTACKED BY SUFFRAGE HEAD

Mrs. Hepburn Tells Legislators "Antis" Have Stony Secret Ally.

(Special to the Farmer.)

Hartford, Feb. 18.—That the so-called "liquor lobby" is working with the anti-suffragists to defeat woman suffrage in this state, was the charge made by Mrs. Thomas N. Hepburn, president of the Connecticut Woman Suffrage association, at a luncheon to the members of the General Assembly yesterday. Mrs. Hepburn said the "liquor lobby" is busy at the capitol and its interests are in the interests of the "antis" campaign.

About 100 members of the General Assembly were present. The executive board of the association received, assisted by Mrs. F. S. Butterworth, Miss Elise Farrum and Miss Olive Dann, of New Haven. A very dainty lunch was served, and the "Votes-for-Woman" cigars proved popular.

Miss Alyse Gregory said that the anti-suffragists had given out to the press statements which reported to be from the secretaries of the different suffrage states in regard to whether women used the vote. Miss Gregory said that the suffragists had tried to verify these statements at the state library, but that they could not be verified. "The fact is," Miss Gregory said, "that in the states where women have been allowed to vote they vote in about the same proportion as men and in the states where they have had the vote the longest time the largest vote is cast by the women."

The next speaker was Mrs. Arnold L. Gebell of New Haven. Mrs. Gebell presented the following striking figures from California in following up Miss Gregory's statement that the women did use the vote. In 1908 before women could vote the total vote cast for president was 336,597. In 1910, before women could vote, the total vote cast for governor was 335,652. In 1912, after women could vote the total vote cast for president was 473,527 and in 1914 after women could vote, the total vote cast for governor was 326,754.

Mrs. Ernest Thompson Soton said, "Even the women in the homes need votes now in order to do the work which they have done through the ages in the past, each family had its own cow and spinning wheel. There were no factories, the children had all their schooling at home. There were practically no public schools, in fact, life was not organized on the social basis that it is today. Government now touches women's work in hundreds of ways in which it did not touch it in the past, that is why votes for women has become a practical necessity to all classes of women. Miss Isabella Sanders spoke next. Miss Sanders said:

"The great industrial change is not the only change that has affected the position of women. The status of women has changed also and if our Constitution was being made today women would undoubtedly be given votes."

Miss Pierson spoke next and said: "The sense of justice of the average man is going to give women votes just as the sense of justice of the average man did when aroused to the helpless position in which women found themselves gave women the right to be educated, the right to go to college, the right to own property and the right to be equal guardians of their children with their father."

Mrs. M. Toscan Bennett, the treasurer of the association, said: "As men now have the ballot in Connecticut and women have not, I feel that men ought to realize its importance to women ever more than women should. Some men seem to feel that they can shoulder off the responsibility of this question onto the women and say 'My wife wouldn't let me.' As the Constitution puts the responsibility of deciding this question upon the electors, it is the duty of men to make up their minds upon it and then convert, if necessary, the women in their families. Some of the best suffragists I know have been converted by their husbands."

Deposits held by Chicago banks increased \$90,000,000 since January 1. A well dressed man, who refused to give his name, created a panic in the lobby of the Hotel McAlpin, New York, when he fired a blank cartridge at Samuel L. Hains, of Philadelphia, a guest of the hotel, crying, "You are a German spy."

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CALLS ENGLAND "WORLD'S BULLY AND GANGSTER"

Editor of The Bridgeport Farmer:—

The really neutral stand of the Farmer in reporting with equal prominence to both sides and in equal tenor, all news which comes to us from the European battle fronts, is truly commendable. If all of our American press was as fair, the people of our country would be in a better position to judge the warring nations properly. Undoubtedly the reason for the number among us who argue the British cause is, in the first place, that our very first reports came exclusively from British sources for the reason that our German cable had been mysteriously cut; and the press, once taking the state favorably to the Allies, is now loath to suddenly acknowledge that it has been mistaken. A noticeable change is taking place in the sympathies expressed in most of our newspapers however, except those of course which are practically owned in London, as are some of our New York papers. It is possible also that our language gives us a point of common sympathy for England. It will be readily seen how easily we might misunderstand the motive of those who speak a strange tongue, more especially if they speak a language presented to us by the nation which professes our own language.

At this date however, it does not seem American of our press to show such very evident partisanship to the world's bully and gangster. For what is England proving but a type of gangster? In an attempt to attack and rob, not to kill, his prosperous neighbor, John Bull has rounded together his cut-throat gang of Indians, blacks, Japs, apaches of France and Russian anarchists. He Gregory said, "that in the states where women have been allowed to vote they vote in about the same proportion as men and in the states where they have had the vote the longest time the largest vote is cast by the women."

England has dished out our land with rapine and plunder, our America. England has since applied the torch and steel to many another fair land—and now she walls if her ship is attacked in her struggle for her own exclusive plotting. It has been proven conclusively that the neutrality of Belgium was merely a phrase, and did not actually exist at the time that the Great Britain had for some time been planning an offensive war in combination with the other great powers of Europe against Germany. And now there comes to us letters and reports from England begging for American intervention and aid, showing the whining of a whipped bully. It is surprising to any American, even sympathetic with such a combatant. Nor do our nation's leaders sympathize with them; for while they have found no cause to protest Germany's action, England's action, on the contrary has been subject to continual protest from our government.

I have tried to feel neutral in this over-sea war; but when I consider the possibility of a victorious England, enriched by her spoliation of Germany's wealth, and strengthened by her seizure of Germany's naval force, and when I consider the Anglo-Japanese alliance, and the Anglo-jealousy of America, I shudder for our own U. S. A. It has been argued that Germany had designs against America. A thoughtful person can readily perceive the futility of our navy the size of the present German navy attacking us at such a great distance from any naval base. With the Anglo-Japanese alliance however, it means to our national safety presents itself. This alliance is capable of attacking both our shores with a naval force more than three times that of the United States, and many naval stations within day's sail of our largest cities would supply them with the wants of war. In this connection it is well to remember the threatening attitude of both Japan and England at various times during the past two years.

It is to be hoped that our really American press will at least present its news in a neutral fashion until such time as events shall prove decisively which side it will be to America's advantage to favor.

C. H. R. AUGUST BELMONT, 62 TODAY. U. S. AGENT OF ROTHSCHILDS. August Belmont, the New York traction magnate and head of the great banking house which represents the Rothschilds in America, was born in New York sixty-two years ago today. The house of Belmont, of which he is the chief, has existed for his father, August Belmont, Sr., who was born in Germany nearly a century ago. The elder Belmont was apprenticed at the age of fourteen to the Rothschild banking house in Frankfurt, where he received his first lessons in high finance. He showed such aptitude that, when only twenty-one, he was sent to Havana to look after the bank's interests in Cuba. There he displayed such genius that he was speedily promoted to New York, where he established the firm of August Belmont & Co., and, with the wealth and influence of the great European banking house behind him, soon became a financial power in the new world. He was active in politics as a Democrat, and represented his adopted country abroad as assistant-general of Austria and minister to Holland. His son August, although younger than Perry Belmont, who chose the law as a profession, became the founder of the bank in 1890, and for a quarter of a century he has been numbered among the great men of Wall street. In addition to his banking interests, he is a large holder of the stock of the corporation operating the New York subways and elevated lines, and the nickels of the strap-hangers of Gotham have added largely to his family fortune. Aside from finance, his chief interest is racing, and he was a prominent figure on the turf when the sport of kings flourished in New York. He is also a yachtman and was a member of aviation. His first wife died in 1898.

Such a relief as it is to see comfortable fullness in spring clothes after the scant "tightness" that has dominated feminine apparel for the last year. Coats and gowns are almost normal, or promise to be. We have to mention a group of new Spring Coats, extremely attractive styles, for early spring:

Scotch Tweeds, indistinctly plaided, light tans and browns, lined with darker shades, grays lined with black, and in some combinations a line of orange. A very smart looking assortment.

Black and white, and dark blue and white plaids and checks, the sensible coats for service and rough wear.

Chinchillas and Polo Cloths in pure white, used very much for evening wear.

English Basket Cloth Coats, white plaided with a color, quite in favor with misses and young girls.

Covert Cloths, genuine Warumbo Coverts, beautifully tailored and lined. Imagine a tan coat lined with apple green satin that runs to a collar of peacock blue. Very fetching combination.

Gabardines and Chuddah Coats in black and colors. These Coats vary in length and are cut with graceful lines, long flares and ripples, many of them having a touch of military piquancy in rows of little buttons and braid adornments.

An inspection is invited.

Linen Handkerchiefs for Women.

A window display on Fairfield Av. will give a little idea of the enormous assortment of pure linen handkerchiefs at the favorite price.

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