

The Commoner.

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

Vol. I. No. 39.

Lincoln, Nebraska, October 18, 1901.

\$1.00 a Year

The Pan-American Conference.

The Pan-American conference to be held in the city of Mexico the latter part of this month is of great importance to the countries participating. A number of subjects of general interest will be considered. Probably the most important question that will arise is arbitration, and it is to be hoped that the representatives of the United States will use their influence to secure the adoption of the resolutions brought before the last Pan-American conference by Secretary of State Blaine.

They were as follows:

"First. That the principle of conquest shall not, during the continuance of the treaty of arbitration, be recognized as admissible under American public law.

"Second. That all cessions of territory made during the continuance of the treaty of arbitration shall be void if made under threats of war or in the presence of an armed force.

"Third. Any nation from which such cessions shall be exacted may demand that the validity of the cessions so made shall be submitted to arbitration.

"Fourth. Any renunciation of the right to arbitration made under the conditions named in the second section shall be null and void."

The fact that the Central and South American republics have been alarmed by the recent imperialistic tendencies of the administration makes it especially opportune for this country to give the assurance which such resolutions would offer.

It would also be worth while to consider the propriety of inviting the other American republics to adopt our ratio between gold and silver and provide for the issuance of coins of the same weight, fineness and denominations as ours. This would facilitate trade between the countries of the western hemisphere. The building and protection of the Nicaragua Canal by the United States is a matter of great importance to all Pan-American countries and the subject should of course be considered.

The Monroe doctrine should be endorsed, for it is of vital concern to the republics of Central and South America, as well as to the United States.

There are other questions looking to the establishment of better mail facilities and better trade regulation which deserve attention; in fact, the scope of the meeting is so great that it would be difficult to limit the discussion to particular questions named in advance. The members of the conference ought to be free to consider all matters of interest to the republics represented.

As to Lying.

Chancellor Andrews of the Nebraska State University, in the course of a lecture delivered at the Chicago University last summer, took

occasion to discuss the subject of lying. He first set forth the excuses that have been given for various forms of lying, and then proceeded to demolish the excuses and to show that lying is not justifiable under any circumstances. Some of the papers in reporting his speech gave the arguments quoted in defense of lying, but failed to give Dr. Andrews' refutation of them. Attention is called to it at this time because some of the republican papers have been trying to make political capital out of this misrepresentation. One of the Chicago papers even criticised Dr. Andrews for discussing the subject. The discussion was not only unobjectionable but entirely proper.

The argument against lying is all the stronger when it meets and overthrows the specious defenses put forth in justification of various forms and degrees of prevarication. It is unfortunate that misrepresentation, which is one form of lying, should be invoked as an answer to the Doctor's arguments against lying.

Shafroth on Philippine Question.

Congressman John F. Shafroth, of Colorado, has just returned from a visit to the Philippine Islands. On another page will be found a statement giving his observations. Coming from one of such high personal character and so capable of forming a just opinion, his words ought to have great weight. THE COMMONER has not based its defense of the Filipino's right to independence upon the degree of civilization which the inhabitants have reached, but has insisted that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that a government which is cast over people like a net, and which creates the condition of citizen and subject is antagonistic to the theories of government which have prevailed in this country from the days of the revolution. But Mr. Shafroth's article ought to be convincing to those who have defended a colonial policy on the ground that the Filipinos needed us to look after them. The salaries voted by the Philippine commission to themselves and to other officials are an indictment against the entire carpet-bag system, and the Republican's conscience must be seared indeed if he cannot see in the extravagance of the commission an indication of what may be expected under a colonial system. If the exorbitant salaries mentioned by Mr. Shafroth are to be paid by the American taxpayers, there will be a revolt here; if they are to be paid by the Filipinos there will be a revolt there. It is no compliment to the honesty of the American people to suppose that they will approve of larger salaries if they are to be paid by the Filipinos

than they would if they were to be paid by the taxpayers here. Mr. Shafroth has rendered a valuable service to his country in setting forth the facts as he has found them, and his voice will be potent in the discussion of the question in congress. The Republicans will find it difficult to meet his facts with their despicable cant about "destiny and duty."

"Unconscious Anarchy."

A recent issue of the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (why the word "Democrat" should be a part of the paper's title is a mystery) contains a most interesting editorial under the caption "Unconscious Anarchy." It is devoted to the criticism of an editorial which appeared in THE COMMONER a short time ago. The Democrat and Chronicle says:

"As Mr. Bryan has said 'our form of government is the best ever devised'—for a people capable of self-government. The reason that it is the best ever devised for such people (and the worst ever devised for people unfitted for self-government) is that it places the governing power unreservedly in the hands of the people. The people have full power, except as it is limited by the fundamental law, to govern or mis-govern themselves exactly as they please and they can alter a fundamental law whenever they choose."

It will be noticed that the Democrat and Chronicle qualifies Mr. Bryan's statement by adding the words, "for a people capable of self-government."

The above language shows the standpoint from which republicans are beginning to view the subject of government. Their attempt to misrepresent democratic doctrines is of little importance, and their conscious and constant twisting of democratic arguments does not deserve attention. But the increasing emphasis with which they denounce the principles of American government is worthy of serious consideration. This doctrine that some people are capable of self-government and that other people are incapable of it, has as a corollary the imperialistic doctrine that the "capable" people should assume, as matter of duty, the government of the incapable ones, and of course while the capable ones are governing the incapable ones, the incapable ones must pay the expenses and the capable ones must make as much profit as possible, nationally and individually, out of the self-imposed duty. Public attention should be called to the present attitude of the Republican party, and its position should be compared with the position taken by those who have been regarded as authority.

Jefferson in his first Inaugural Address said: "Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the governing of himself. Can he, then, be trusted with the governing of others? Or have we found angels in the form