

error, sometimes too late, if they attempt to trample upon it. Austria-Hungary as a federation of states, each absolutely independent in its internal affairs, would be strong, but Austria-Hungary, composed of dissatisfied groups all yielding unwillingly to an arrogant Austrian influence, is pitifully weak.

The tie which holds Canada, Australia and New Zealand to England is infinitely stronger than that which binds Hungary and Bohemia to the Austria-Hungarian throne. And why? Not because they use the same language, for the American colonies wrote the Declaration of Independence in the same tongue that George III. employed. Canada, Australia and New Zealand are loyal to England because England allows them to do as they please. If a British parliament acted toward these colonies as the imperial government acts toward Hungary and Bohemia, even a common language and a common history could not prevent a separation. "There is a scattering that increaseth," says Solomon, "and a withholding of more than is meet, but it tendeth to penury." The proverb can be applied to governments, and Francis Joseph might consider it with profit.

It must be remembered that Bohemia is no insignificant part of the empire. It has an area of twenty thousand square miles and a population of more than six millions, and is rich in minerals and in manufactures. It is noted for glass works, Bohemian glass having a world-wide reputation. It has important textile industries also, and its agriculture has been carried to a high state of perfection. It has played a conspicuous part in the history of central Europe, is rich in heroes and possesses a strong national spirit.

Prague, its capital city, has long been an educational center and is still the seat of its intellectual as well as its political life. There is a very complete industrial school at the capital which contributes in no small degree to the country's prominence in manufacturing. Just now Bohemia is the Mecca for violinists, America contributing her quota of students.

John Huss's church is still one of Prague's landmarks, although the Catholic church has regained its supremacy. The Hradschin and the public buildings surrounding the Hradschiner Platz are of historic interest, as is also the old Jewish burying ground.

Our American consul at Prague, Mr. Ledoux, has inaugurated a very praiseworthy index system for the collection and preservation of information of value to importers and exporters. He has converted one room of the consular office into a reading room where American trade papers are kept for the business public and where a list of American exporters with a description of their wares may be examined by those desiring to purchase. If is an application of the public library system to trade and struck me as likely to be of value in increasing our sales.

Carlsbad is only a few hours ride from Prague, and I took advantage of that fact to visit it. It is built along the narrow and winding valley of the Tepl and is nearly twelve hundred feet above the sea. It has been a health resort for some six or seven centuries and is now visited yearly by more than fifty thousand invalids. The water is hot, and the numerous springs seem to come from a common reservoir. The principal spring, called the Sprudel, has a temperature of a hundred and sixty-four degrees and contains sulphate of soda, carbonate of soda and common salt. The solid substances deposited by the water soon form into a very hard rock which takes a polish like marble. These deposits gather so rapidly that all pipes leading from the springs, and the springs themselves, must be frequently cleaned or they would soon be choked up.

Liver complaint is the disease which brings most of the visitors to Carlsbad, and I was surprised to find that, instead of being a fashionable resort, a large majority of the people who assemble here are of the middle classes. It is a city of boarding houses and small hotels with a few larger establishments. By eleven o'clock the streets are deserted and the town asleep, probably because the early morning is the time for drinking the water. I rose at five and with our vice consul at Prague, Mr. Weissburger, as my guide, hurried to the springs; the invalids were even then beginning to come forth, each with his mug, and soon there was a swarm of them. The city has erected large pavilions at several of the springs, and at two of these bands play between six and eight. By 6:30 the streets were crowded and the pavilions jammed. The numerous attendants were kept busy filling the mugs (which are put into long handled holders) from the gushing fountains. At the time of the

Lisbon earthquake the largest spring is said to have ceased its flow for three days.

Riding through Bohemia at this time of the year, one sees a great deal of fine farming land, the only unpleasant feature being the number of women at work in the fields and along the roads. The more one sees of the world, the more he can appreciate the remark of that witty Frenchman, Max O'Rell who, in his lecture on "Her Royal Highness, Woman," declares that if he were going to be born one of that sex, he would pray to be born in America. Woman's position in our country is not only vastly superior to her position in Asia, but very much better than the position of the average woman in continental Europe.

Vienna is not only the capital of the Austria-Hungarian empire, but is one of the greatest cities of Europe. It is worth visiting for its architecture alone, its public buildings combining massiveness and grace. It is also rich in monuments and statuary and well supplied with drives, parks and places of amusement. The boulevards are lined with restaurants, each with a large yard filled with tables and chairs, the refreshments being served in the open air during the summer months. These places are thronged in the evening and on Sunday afternoon, families often bringing their lunch baskets and buying their coffee or beer at the restaurant.

The coffee houses, as they are found in Vienna, deserve mention. These are scattered all over the city and are very popular. Newspapers are usually kept on file and the customers read the events of the day while they sip their coffee or beer.

Vienna is a musical center, and its theaters are not surpassed anywhere. We attended a production of Faust there, a French opera built upon Goethe's great drama, and found the theater constructed with a special view to the accommodation of a large orchestra. Nor is it strange that music should be so distinguishing a feature of Viennese life when it is remembered that it was the home of Strauss, of Haydn, of Mozart, of Schubert and of Beethoven, not to speak of a number of lesser lights.

Vienna is also famous for its educational institutions. Its university has an honorable record of more than five centuries, and its medical college is attended by students from every land.

Vienna is also an example in the matter of municipal ownership, it having gone beyond all the other cities on the continent in the taking over of what are known as the natural monopolies. It finds it not only possible to own and operate its water works, lighting plants and tramways, but it finds it profitable to do so, the profits which under private ownership go to the stockholders accruing in Vienna to the whole people. So successful is municipal ownership in practice that opposition to the principle has been silenced. Those who, in the United States, are struggling in spite of the influence of organized wealth exerted through subsidized newspapers, corrupted councils and sometimes even through a biased judiciary, to restore the streets of our cities to the public, can find encouragement in Vienna's experience. The conflict can have but one end, namely, triumph for municipal ownership. "Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

Austria-Hungary has a well developed system of forestry; I noticed this on a former visit and made inquiries about it this time. There is a law compelling the planting of a tree whenever one is cut down, and not content with maintaining the present number, the denuded hills are being replanted. It seems difficult to turn public attention to any subject until some abuse has made action imperative, but the sooner our own country awakes to the danger involved in the destruction of our timber, the less we shall be compelled to suffer for the enormous waste committed in our forests.

I have been intending for some time to speak of the matter of permanent buildings for our embassies, and Vienna is a case in point. Our ambassador at Vienna, Mr. Francis, has had difficulty in finding a suitable place for the embassy. I discussed the subject during my former visit abroad, and my observations on this trip have still further strengthened the opinion that our country owes it to itself as well as its representatives to purchase or erect at each of the foreign capitals a permanent embassy building. At present each new ambassador or minister must begin his official career with a house-hunting expedition, and the local landlords, knowing this, are quick to take advantage of the situation. At one place an American ambassador was recently asked to pay double what his predecessor had paid, and as he was not willing to do this, he is still living at a

hotel. There are not many suitable buildings from which to select, and our representative is at the mercy of those who control the limited supply. Diplomatic requirements are such that the embassy must be centrally located and sufficiently commodious to enable the ambassador or minister to return the courtesies which he receives. Small apartments are numerous, and there are a few palaces which can be rented, but the former are not large enough and the latter much larger than necessary. Our government ought to own a building conveniently located and suitable for the offices and home of the ambassador. It must either do this or choose between two systems, both of which are bad, viz., compel the representative to spend more than his salary for house rent or continually increase the salary of diplomatic representatives to keep pace with the growing rent in the capitals of the world. To throw the burden upon the government's representative is undemocratic; to risk constantly increasing rent is false economy. It is not in harmony with our theory of government to have an important branch of the public service open to rich men only, and that is the case under the present system. No poor man can afford to accept an appointment as an American minister or ambassador to any of the principal countries of Europe, and as the years go by, the expense of a diplomatic residence will become greater as the value of urban property increases. While the telegraph and the cable have somewhat decreased the responsibility of the foreign representative by bringing him into closer contact with the home government, still much depends upon the ability, the sagacity and the discretion of those whom we send abroad. Our government ought to be in a position to select from the whole citizen body those most competent for the work to be entrusted to them, and it goes without saying that efficiency in the public service is not measured by the amount of money which an official has either inherited or accumulated.

There is another argument in favor of the building of permanent embassy buildings which ought to have weight with our people. If diplomatic representatives are chosen only from those who are able to spend more than their official incomes, it naturally follows that some will be richer than others and that the establishments maintained will differ in expensiveness. In fact, experience has shown that a new representative is sometimes embarrassed by the lavish expenditures of a preceding one. The standing of our nation abroad demands that our ambassadors and ministers shall live in a style in keeping with our ideas, and extravagance is as offensive as parsimony. By owning its own embassy buildings, our government can regulate the standard of living and entertainment of those who represent it at foreign courts. There is no doubt that our nation must ultimately come to this plan, and the sooner it adopts it, the better.

Copyright.

PRIMARY PLEDGE

As this copy of The Commoner may be read by some one not familiar with the details of the primary pledge plan, it is necessary to say that according to the terms of this plan every democrat is asked to pledge himself to attend all of the primaries of his party to be held between now and the next democratic national convention, unless unavoidably prevented, and to secure a clear, honest and straight-forward declaration of the party's position on every question upon which the voters of the party desire to speak. Those desiring to be enrolled can either write to The Commoner approving the object of the organization and asking to have their names entered on the roll, or they can fill out and mail the blank pledge, which is printed on page 14.

Extracts from letters received at The Commoner office follow:

W. E. Planger, Seven Fountains, Va.—Enclosed find twenty signatures to the primary pledge.

J. S. McFadden, Greeley, Neb.—You may think me a little slow in sending in my primary pledge, but here it is.

J. W. Jacoby, Marion, Ohio—Enclosed find thirty-five signatures to the primary pledge.

M. J. Colton, Buffalo, N. Y.—I send you seven primary pledge signatures.

J. C. Barker, Waiveville, W. Va.—Enclosed you will find the names of twenty-six more signers to the primary pledge. They are all good Jefferson and Jackson democrats. I think there would be no trouble in electing a democrat president if there is a democrat of the old type nominated—one who stands on true democratic principles instead of graft.