

A Campaign Is Approaching

No one who follows the proceedings in congress can fail to notice evidence of the fact that a campaign is approaching. The regular republicans and the progressive republicans are sparring for advantage. Instead of considering the merits of the issues presented, there is a very evident tendency to seize upon anything that promises to give them party advantage.

This is quite natural, but it is also more or less dangerous. The administration is dealing with questions of grave importance and the average citizen is much more interested in securing needed legislation than he is in which party gets credit for it. The president, accepting the responsibilities which fall upon those in power, is moving straight forward with the reforms to which he is committed, turning aside only where new exigencies require attention. The

effort which has been made to interfere with the plans which he has formed for dealing with questions affecting other nations is not likely to win public support, for the chief executive is the one entrusted by the constitution with the conduct of diplomatic negotiations. The attempt to put a small special interest against the larger considerations with which the president is dealing in the tolls question, finds no considerable sympathy among the voters, and the partisan speeches made by republicans against the president's Mexican policy are awakening widespread criticism. When thirteen votes were recorded against the vote of confidence passed by the senate, one of the republicans remarked that he hoped it would not prove an unlucky number. In the meantime the president is gladdened by a growing confidence in his methods as well as in his purpose. W. J. BRYAN.

THE TEMPERANCE CAUSE GROWING

The readers of The Commoner will be interested to know that Secretary Daniels is receiving widespread praise for the order which excludes intoxicating liquors from the vessels of the navy and the navy yards after the first of July. The enlisted men in the navy are not permitted to carry or use liquor on shipboard, but an exception has been made in favor of the officers.

It is not surprising that the subordinates should feel that they were being discriminated against by a system which carefully excluded the use of liquor among them while it was permitted to their superior officers. If liquor is good, why should the enlisted men be denied its benefits? And if liquor is so bad that the government is justified in forbidding its use to enlisted men, why should its use be permitted to officers?

The higher the officer the more important it is that his head shall be clear and his nerves steady; so that the logic of the case is on the side of the men, rather than on the side of the officers, if drink is to be allowed.

But there is another reason why the order is a wise one. The officer should set a good example to his men. Nothing that he can say carries an influence approximating the influence exerted by example. The subordinate is not likely to feel in his heart any great respect for his superior officers if he sees them indulging in that which clouds the mind and dethrones the reason.

Congratulations to our great secretary of the navy, who dares to teach democracy to those who serve in the navy, for it is democracy to treat all alike in a matter of such importance.

But the navy department is not the only place where temperance is being taught. Hon. Cato Sells, commissioner of Indian affairs, has recently issued a statement which reads as follows:

"Washington, March 27, 1914.—To All Employees in the Indian Service: The following is an excerpt from my address to the conference of field supervisors on the evening of Feb. 20, 1914:

"I believe that the greatest present menace to the American Indian is whiskey: It does more to destroy his constitution and invite the ravages of disease than anything else: It does more to demoralize him as a man and frequently as a woman: It does more to make him an easy prey to the unscrupulous than everything else combined. If I say nothing more to you tonight that leaves an impression, let it be this one thought: Let us save the American Indian from the curse of whiskey.

"We have a force of men engaged in the suppression of the liquor traffic. That is their special business. But it is my business, and it is your business, to do everything we can without injecting ourselves offensively into the work of others or assuming a duty that is not properly ours, to create an atmosphere, and suggest conditions that will be helpful in this respect, and above all to be a personal object-lesson inviting the Indian to banish liquor, rather than to be guilty of anything that may cause him to look upon one of us as a justification for doing that

which leads him to the destruction caused by the use of whiskey.

"There is nothing that could induce me, since I have taken the oath of office as commissioner of Indian affairs, to touch a single drop of any sort of intoxicating liquor, and this regardless of my attitude on the prohibition question.

"As a matter of good faith to our treaty relationships, to legislative enactments, to the congress which appropriates \$100,000 a year for the suppression of the liquor traffic among the Indians, we should do everything reasonably within our power to justify this appropriation and insure the best results obtainable. This accomplished, we have laid a substantial foundation for all of our work in solving the Indian problem, and made a long step forward looking toward their equipment for the responsibilities of citizenship."

"It is my great desire that every employee in the Indian service shall realize the tremendous importance of the liquor suppression work, and exert his best efforts and influence for the protection of the Indian from this, his worst enemy.

"I desire this letter to be regarded as a personal communication to every employee in the Indian service, and that it be seriously treated as such, and I especially request that on the 6th day of April, 1914, the same be read to the student body of every Indian school, including those under government, mission, or private supervision. Sincerely yours, CATO SELLS, Commissioner."

Mr. Sells takes the right view of the subject. He is practicing what he preaches. He will not use liquor himself because he will not set a bad example to those whom he is endeavoring to serve and benefit. This is the spirit that ought to animate those who are in responsible positions.

It is interesting to note that Hon. Joseph H. Choate, former ambassador to Great Britain, and one of the leading lawyers of the nation, has felt so much interested in Mr. Sells' order that he has written him the following letter of endorsement:

"New York City, March 28, 1914.—My Dear Mr. Sells: I thank you very much for sending me a copy of your letter: 'To all employees in the Indian Service.' You are absolutely right in your position that if we can save the American Indian from the curse of whiskey, we can save him from pretty much all the other ills that threaten him. Yours very truly, (Signed) JOSEPH H. CHOATE."

Mr. Sells is making a splendid official and this is one of the most meritorious of his many worthy deeds.

Six republican members of the house who voted against the free tolls exemption when the matter was before that body two years ago voted against its repeal when the issue was raised a few weeks ago. The only possible reason for this change of front was a belief that if they could prevent the passage of the repeal the administration would be embarrassed. Men who legislate merely for partisan advantage will have considerable difficulty in securing enrollment in any organization of patriots.

OUR PRESIDENT

How well he seems to have managed it—this whole sordid business of going to war; how fair he has been; how patient, how dignified, how infinitely gentle and kind. No bluster, no threats, no snicker of anticipation; no licking of the nation's chops—just a simple-souled, brave, soft-hearted, hard-headed man. It is sad enough to go into war of any kind at any time; but it is less sad to go knowing that every honorable means has been taken to keep away from war. And this consolation President Wilson has given us by his wise, forbearing, Christian attitude before the provocation of a foe mad and desperate and foolish. The good God, who knows all and watches over all, and sees all, and directs all, was in our hearts deeper than we knew when as a nation we chose this great, serene soul to lead us.—William Allen White.

THE TREATIES

The peace propoganda moves on. Fifteen treaties have been signed providing for investigation in all questions—the last one being with Italy, the largest nation with which a treaty of this kind has been made. Negotiations are about completed with ten other nations, Great Britain, France, Norway, Brazil, Argentina, Chili, Uruguay, Cuba and China. When these nations have signed, governments representing considerably more than half the world's population will be bound to us by treaties which will make war between this country and them almost impossible.

There seems to be very general agreement upon the fact that most of the war talk that has been heard came from persons who had investments in Mexico they wanted those of us who had made our investments at home to protect. In effect this was a demand that we spend part of our property in order that they might not lose a part of theirs. The assumption of risk, in other words, they desired to shift to other shoulders. One can understand why a man with money invested in Mexico would be anxious to have the United States send an army there, but why anybody else would consider it unpatriotic not to do as he wished, is a puzzler.

The grain and cattle markets are proving themselves to be no friends to those republicans who hope to ride into congress or the senate this year by proving to the farmer how hard he has been hit by the foreign competition to which the new democratic tariff has subjected him. They are uniformly marking higher prices for what the farmer produces than he got before the tariff law was passed. These casual students of the tariff will some day discover just how little an effect on prices the comparatively small importation of farm products can and will have.

The editorial paragraphers had some fun during the past month with Secretaries McAdoo and Houston and Comptroller Williams because four of the twelve cities they selected for regional banks were located in the three states from which these gentlemen hail. If they had had time to think up a comeback they might have suggested that the commanding importance of these cities was first given official recognition when two cabinet officers and the head of the banking department were selected from their citizenship.

The prophecy that Roosevelt will be the presidential nominee of the progressives and the republicans in 1916 is still being repeated, and apparently is finding a few more believers. If that should happen, it would be painful to witness the efforts of a number of esteemed republican spellbinders to revise the campaign speeches they made in 1912.

The ready debaters found it difficult to get up much of a commotion over whether Huerta ought to have been required to salute the flag after he had insulted it in Tampico. The average man merely said: "Well, if Wilson thinks a salute ought to be demanded and made, let him use the army and navy to force one." And that ended all argument.