

the heart when one is conscious of its own wrong doing, and does not intend to reform. Every word bears the imprint of the arrogance which the possession of power breeds in little minds.

And it must be remembered too that this attack, made by a railroad president upon the democratic administration, follows immediately after the announcement that the interstate commerce commission, a majority of the members of which are democrats, has permitted an increase in railroad rates. A subsidized press has for months been making the air vocal with the promise that an increase in railroad rates would at once start the wheels going and insure prosperity. But something has happened since these promises were made; the election shows a gain for the republicans in the house of representatives—a gain due almost entirely to the return of the progressives to the republican party, but a gain. Penrose is re-elected to the senate, and Cannon goes back to congress, and the whole pack of reactionaries begin to yelp as if they already scented blood. We shall hear no more of prosperity from these sources for their purpose is to delay prosperity, if they can, until the republican party returns to power and spreads another Belshazzar's feast for the favor seeking classes. A generation ago the Erie was brought into prominence by the political activities of one of its magnates; the present head of the road seems ambitious to win an equally odious prominence. W. J. BRYAN.

CREATING PUBLIC OPINION

A glance at the columns of the daily and weekly papers of the middle west will convince any one that a campaign is on by the railroads to secure an advance in passenger and freight rates. Thousands of dollars are being spent in the columns of the newspapers in an effort to convince the newspaper owners or the people that general business prosperity is impossible without permitting the railroads to charge the public a higher rate for their service. Creating public opinion at so much per inch advertising space will cost the railroads a few hundred thousand dollars, but the rise in rates, if granted, will cost the public millions of dollars each year for years to come. On what basis of valuation of the roads is their claim for an increase in income made? What will the physical valuation of railroads being made by the federal government show when completed, and is it possible that the cyclonic demand campaign created by the railroads for higher rates is for the purpose of having their own valuation figures used as a basis before the government figures are ready?

The report of Secretary McAdoo showed that in spite of the withdrawals that followed upon the heels of the war-created panic, the treasury lost less than 90 millions in gold, while none was suffered by the country at large. The advantage of a stable system of finances that is modern in its workings and able to promptly cope with every emergency was never more strikingly shown. And it was the democratic party that gave this to the nation, after republican secretaries had been recommending changes for more than three decades.

One of the delusions that official representatives of the democratic party should refrain from entertaining is that during their term of office they can pursue a course that sets at naught the policies of the president and interferes with the accomplishments of his party-aims, and then appeal with confidence to his supporters for re-election on the ground that Wilson needs them in congress.

That the presidential campaign is only one year distant is shown by the increased bitterness and the added vituperative quality of the speeches of republican members of congress, when the democratic administration is their theme. This is what is called manufacturing campaign capital and is supposed to aid the critic's party, but is really illuminative only of his conception of public intelligence.

When General Crozier of the army and Admiral Badger of the navy appeared before the house military committee, each displayed an entire absence of panic over the condition of the national defense. They had the advantage of knowing what they were talking about, an example that, if followed by the republican congressional jingoes, might bring about in them the same calm state of nerves.

Decorative separator line of circles.

AT FIFTY-EIGHT

Our President

Patient and calm, in silent strength serene,
Amidst the storms a beacon tower—
Friend, fellow citizen and president,
To whom we give imperial power,—
All eyes where breakers roar to him are turned,
Uncrowned world leader of the hour.
Imbued with Washington's enobling aims,
And Jefferson's democracy—
Which sees God's image in the common man—
And Franklin's wise simplicity,
He acts with Jackson's firm, unbending will
And Lincoln's Christ-like sympathy.
Heir to the wisdom of the centuries,
And making all the best his own,—
Filled with the spirit of his favored land,
Where sceptered rule was never known,
He rises over Caesars, kings and lords
By grace of right and truth alone.
Lead on! The hearts of all are hungering.
For fellowship and unity;
None pray for war; men long to sheathe the sword,
And end the age long tragedy.
Lead us, and guide our friends of other lands
In peace to perfect liberty.
—Martin F. Tew.

PAID LECTURES

Vice-President Marshall was recently interviewed at Boston as to whether he, as a public official, had a right to deliver lectures for compensation. His reply was short and to the point. He holds that a public official has the right to appear on the lecture platform so long as it does not interfere with his official duties and also approves of a plan which gives the people an opportunity to see their public servants and to judge as to their sincerity. Mr. Marshall's interview follows:

"It is really nobody's business but my own whether I deliver lectures or what I do while the congress is not in session so long as I behave myself," said vice-President Marshall, in expressing himself on the right of public officials to lecture for compensation. "I do not believe the people of the United States care whether I am paid for lecturing or not, or whether I am worth a million or nothing. I believe they do care whether I am on the job as president of the senate when the congress is in session. I was on the job when the senate was sitting and when it adjourned, and I will be back on the job when it convenes Monday. I hold that public officials have a right to make public addresses and to accept compensation when neglect of duty is not involved; and more than this. I hold that it affords them opportunity to face the American people and to be judged by the people as to their sincerity."

The naval reserve plan championed by Secretary Daniels has the distinction of fitting in with the traditional policy of this nation upon the question of preparedness for war. That policy is a small army and a capable navy, backed by a citizenry that stands ready to defend the nation from any aggression. Mr. Daniels' plan is to utilize the trained men who leave the naval service as a reserve to be called upon when it is necessary to man the fighting machines with capable men. Its utility lies in the fact that necessarily, under a four years' enlistment, there must always be a large percentage of only partly trained men upon our cruisers.

With the convening of the various state legislatures, there emerges the patriotic citizen who has a scheme for making the direct primary more flexible. The fact that eight out of ten of the suggestions made for "improvement" of the primary includes the reinstatement of the convention in one form or another as a part of the election machinery is significant of their origin.

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

The children have received their presents and are happy—the older people have given presents and are happier still. How our conceptions of enjoyment change as we grow older! The child, the recipient of gifts at each Christmas time, and of care and kindness all the days between, looks forward to receiving; and its joy is full if its letters to Santa Claus, or its expressed wishes to parents cover the tree, or fill the stocking, with the things desired.

It would be cruel to take away from the child this ideal before it is able to indulge the larger and more permanent passion for doing good. But if the child's development is normal, it gradually becomes aware of a change in its conception of life, a change which should take place as it becomes able to be helpful by word, by act, or by gift. It becomes more and more conscious of the truthfulness of the doctrine—"It is more blessed to give than to receive," and then, as life exemplifies the "scattering that increaseth," one becomes instructed in the great truth of human existence, namely, that man is put upon this earth, not to absorb from his fellowmen but to spend himself in their behalf. He finds that his happiness, as well as his greatness, is measured by what he puts into the world rather than by what he takes out of it. Christ, to whose birthday the children look forward so impatiently, furnished us the highest example of giving, but even the humblest of us may take inspiration from His life and make our own lives fruitful and full of satisfaction by rendering helpful service. W. J. BRYAN.

The firm and dignified character of the note sent by the administration to England in support of the protest against unjustified seizures of merchant vessels, gained for it the instant close attention of the English cabinet. It seems to have disappointed some of the jingoists who think that no government protest is forcible unless it indicates that the national saber has been loosened in the scabbard, or gives a hint that smoke is up in the embattled fleets, but it seems to have satisfied the plain citizen who is interested only in getting what he is entitled to, and who believes that nations, in their dealings one with another, should follow the same method as do individuals.

The vote in congress upon the question of nation-wide prohibition gave strong testimony to the virtue of that policy as it has been applied to the states. The south is one section of the country that has attempted the abolition of the trade in liquor by the adoption of state-wide prohibitory laws. Of the 197 votes cast in favor of extending that policy towards the nation, 89 were furnished by southern men, and eleven of the sixteen southern states either unanimously or by a majority vote were lined up in its favor. It was the voice of experience speaking in behalf of a policy tried and found successful.

The New York stock exchange has been open for six weeks or more, and that of London for two weeks. In neither of them has there appeared any of that panicky desire to throw over American securities that our wise men believed would follow the declaration of a general war in Europe. Instead there has been shown a disposition to make still further investments on the theory that if there is any one country where it is perfectly safe nowadays to invest it is America. The exchanges were closed on the theory that the money invested in our securities would be needed to finance the war. It is merely another illustration of how even the wisest are misled by their fears.

The declaration of the president that much of the depression from which business suffered was psychological in character is being proved true by events. Every daily newspaper one picks up makes note of the fact of such and such a mill reopening or increasing its working forces—and not a single democratic policy or law that were blamed for their suspension has been repealed meanwhile.

THE FIGHT IS ON

The readers of The Commoner will notice the evidence of concerted attack on the administration. Plutocracy has been scotched, not killed. Every democrat must buckle on his armor and get ready for the fray. We must hold the ground already taken, and then we shall be able to go forward.