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ISSUED MONTHLY

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THE COMMONER, LINCOLN, NEB.

Here's a declaration heard thousands of times since the great war started in Europe: "It's lucky for the United States that it has Woodrow Wilson in the presidency now. A president disposed to fight every time somebody makes a loud noise in his vicinity would have had this country embroiled before this." Nothing very brilliant or profound about that remark, but it has the merit of wisdom and of being a specific expression of general sentiment.

Senator LaFollette has been trying for a number of years to secure enough support among his party members for his seaman's bill, providing better conditions for the seamen, and greater safety precautions, but the shipping trust always had too many friends among the republican members. The passage of the bill was one of the last acts of the democratic senate. Here is a fact that should give the fighting senator from Wisconsin some food for thought.

The sudden and considerable drops in the price of wheat that followed upon the bombardment of the Dardenelles, a movement which if successful, will release a large Russian supply for use abroad, indicated very clearly that it was not the farmers of this country who were holding their crops for speculation, as the grain gamblers made very plain when they heard the news. It was one of the pretty fictions of the market and the newspapers that the producers were reaping the benefit of the high prices, but it exploded with a bang when the speculators became excited.

So far as observation goes, every effort made by the hack politicians to hamstring the direct primary, has met with defeat in the state legislatures this winter. Some wanted to insert a nominating convention that should winnow the candidates down to a small number and others wanted to limit it to the smaller groups of voters on the plea that opportunity is lacking for intelligent selection. Citing the fact that there is not a single argument urged against the direct primary that is not equally applicable to the general election is the easiest way of closing this debate.

THE TYRANT WAR

O monstrous War, your carnage turns to blood
the dew of morn;
Your cruel hand has blighted generations yet
unborn!
You force brave men of vigor death in woeful
form to face,
And leave unfitted weaklings to be fathers of a
race.
You ruin mighty cities with your hostile torch
and shell,
Then you treat your helpless victims to a vision
of their hell.
You spread disease and famine as you torture
and bereave,
You stay the hand of progress in her effort to
achieve.
May Man through coming ages from your power
find release.
And feel the blessed comfort of a universal peace.
—Susan Fishner Milner, in Kansas City Journal.

The Man of Burdens

In these troubled times, when every day shows more clearly the dangers that confront even the most sincere neutrality, the hearts of all Americans should go out in sympathy and support to that solitary man sitting in the White House at Washington who carries the welfare of one hundred million people so largely in his hand.

His is a staggering responsibility. It is the greatest that could be laid on the chief executive of any nation in time of peace. No American since Lincoln has borne such a burden—has been confronted with issues which are so big with fate for the land we love.

It is easy for those who do not share his burden or realize its tremendous weight on heart and mind to say what ought to be done under any and all circumstances. But his is the solemn duty not only of saying but also of acting; not only of acting but also of doing so with the knowledge that the welfare of his fellow citizens may hang upon his course.

Under such circumstances President Wilson needs the sympathy and support of every true American. He needs to know that political friends and foes alike are with him; that they know the burden he is carrying and believe that he will carry it—if with pain and labor to himself—with honor to the nation.

He should be made to feel that there is from one end of the country to another an abiding faith in his integrity and singleness of purpose and in his absolute determination to walk with circumspection but directly to the goal—stepping aside neither in the spirit of truculence nor subservience.

He should be made to feel that partisanship and personal feeling wholly cease to have a meaning for Americans when their president is confronted with what may quickly develop into an international crisis of grave significance; that the whole moral force and the whole heart and the whole mind of the nation are his to lean upon or to call upon for support.

And above all he should be made to feel that Americans understand how free from the taint of personal ambition and pride are his high-minded efforts to serve his country in these moments of its need for wise guidance; that it is of his country and not of himself he thinks first and last of all; that his one aim is to serve her and her alone.

Nothing that could be said or felt or done can avail to abate his high and solemn responsibility. But his way may and should be brightened by the knowledge that those for whom he stands and speaks and labors have confidence in his integrity, his ability, his singleness of purpose and his zeal.—Chicago Herald.

IMPARTIALITY PROVEN

A religious prejudice often causes one person to form a mistaken opinion as to the actions of others. We reproduce below two letters received at The Commoner office in the same mail, each contradicting the other, and both proving Mr. Bryan's impartiality in the matter referred to. The two letters follow:

"Yamhill, Oregon.—Mr. William J. Bryan, Lincoln, Nebr. Dear Sir: As my time is about up for The Commoner, I have concluded to quit taking it. I never believed in catering to the Pope of Rome, and if I support you it will be supporting them. I thought you were the man for the people, but standing in with the Pope will put you out of business. I have heard some good old democrats say they would not support you on that account. Yours truly, H. P. Cornelison."

"Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, Gaylord, Michigan.—The Commoner: By a post office ruling a neglect on my part to renew the subscription is tantamount to serving a notice on you that the paper is not wanted. I, with the rest of our Catholic people, are greatly disappointed in Mr. William J. Bryan,—and the sooner the democratic party, which has fully proven its incompetency, goes out of business, the better it will be for the country at large. This may sound to you very undiplomatic or even impertinent, but we country pastors are accustomed to serve the truth undiluted and sine parabolis. Respectfully, Simon Ponganis."

The comment by the friends of the countries that are at war in Europe on the letter written by the secretary of state to Senator Stone, as to this government's attitude towards the bel-

ligerents, as shown in an article reproduced below from the Louisville Times, proves the impartiality and the absolute neutrality of the United States government in its handling of the delicate issues raised by the most terrible war in history. The Times article follows:

"Clement A. Griscom, of Philadelphia, writes to Senator Stone to complain that Mr. Bryan's letter 'conclusively proves' that 'almost every action that has been taken by the administration has been in favor of Germany and against the Allies.' He adds: 'The administration of these United States has been the catspaw of German manipulation long enough.'—New York World.

"Quite another view is taken by Mr. Herman Ridder, who is fully persuaded that Mr. Bryan's letter is a craven surrender to England, consequently a blow at Germany.

"From all which conflict of opinion, it may reasonably be supposed that Mr. Bryan has come fairly close to making out a strong case for the one and only interest that he undertakes to speak for. Germany and England are the two great belligerents. The United States is the one great neutral. Their interests, if not diametrically opposed, are, at the least, not in harmony. Had Mr. Bryan attempted to harmonize them, he would have rightly been subject to the displeasure either of Mr. Griscom or Mr. Ridder, or, conceivably, of both.

"What Mr. Bryan has done has been to define the American, not the Anglo-American or German-American position. That in so doing he has satisfied neither of two vociferous advocates of a hyphenated Americanism is in itself satisfying proof that genuine Americans have no cause for complaint."—Louisville Times.

AN EXAMPLE WORTH FOLLOWING

The republicans, who have ridiculed the substitution of grape juice for alcoholic liquors in the entertainment of visitors, may be interested in the following extract, which will be found in a book by Allen T. Rice, issued by Harper Brothers in 1909. Among the reminiscences recorded is one from the pen of Charles Carleton Coffin (to be found on pages 172 to 175 of the book above mentioned). The quotation reads:

"It was eight o'clock Saturday evening when the committee called upon Mr. Lincoln. * * * Conversation flowed as freely and laughingly as a meadow brook. * * * 'Mrs. Lincoln will be pleased to see you, gentlemen,' said Mr. Lincoln. 'You will find her in the other room. You must be thirsty after your long ride. You will find a pitcher of water in the library.' * * *

"I crossed the hall and entered the library. Upon the plain table was a pitcher of cold water and glasses, but no wines or liquors. There was humor in the invitation to take a glass of water, which was explained to me by a citizen, who said that when it was known that the committee was coming, several citizens called upon Mr. Lincoln and informed him that some entertainment must be provided.

"'Yes, that is so. What ought to be done? Just let me know and I will attend to it,' he said. 'O, we will supply the needful liquors,' said his friends.

"'Gentlemen,' said Mr. Lincoln, 'I thank you for your kind intentions, but must respectfully decline your offer. I HAVE NO LIQUORS IN MY HOUSE, AND HAVE NEVER BEEN IN THE HABIT OF ENTERTAINING MY FRIENDS IN THAT WAY. I CAN NOT PERMIT MY FRIENDS TO DO FOR ME WHAT I WILL NOT MYSELF DO. I SHALL PROVIDE COLD WATER—NOTHING ELSE.'"

The Publicity association is the name of a republican organization that announces as its purpose the "harmonizing and bringing together of all who believe in the fundamental principles of the republican party and to gather and disseminate information which will demonstrate the superiority of republican principles and accomplishments." It is understood that it will not issue an immediate comparison of the work accomplished by the last republican congress with that of the last democratic congress.

With two of the principal measures passed by the democratic congress covering appropriations of 35 million dollars for a government-owned railroad in Alaska and putting the government into the insurance business by authorizing the sale of war risks on ship cargoes, the old-time populists who aided much in placing the democratic party under popular control should feel that their sacrifices and their labors in behalf of dearly-held principles were not in vain.